CAMPBELL;

OR, THE

SCOTTISH PROBATIONER.

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A NOVEL.

Hard is the Scholar's lot, condemned to sail,
Unpatronised, o'er life's tempestuous wave:
Clouds blind his sight; nor blows a friendly gale,
To waft him to one port—except the grave.

PENROSE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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CAMPBELL.



CHAPTER I.

Along the cool sequestered vale of life
He kept the noiseless tenor of *his* way.

Gray.

Ye powers who rule the tongue (if such there are),
And make colloquial happiness your care,
Preserve me from the thing I dread and hate,
A duel in the form of a debate.

Cowper.

Having spent the greater part of a long life in unremitted, but generally ineffectual, endeavours to be useful to myself and others, I am anxious that my errors and misfortunes should be recorded *pro bono publico.* Like him therefore who, dying of an incurable disorder, bequeaths his body for dissection, I sit down to write an unembellished narrative of my varied life, trusting that the time which is employed in perusing

my humble tale, may not be altogether unprofitably spent.

Having little of which to accuse the world, and still less upon which to congratulate myself in the subsequent narration, I shall

> Nothing extenuate,
> Nor set down aught in malice.

And being equally a stranger to private resentments, my pages are not intended as the vehicles of personal satire ; and flattery would be without an aim, from him to whom the season of hope is past, and whose only remaining wish is to descend peacefully to the grave.

My father, a plain honest Scotsman, was born between the Tay and the Grampians, where he farmed about fifty acres of land ; the occupation of which, partly through the kindness of its successive proprietors, and partly owing, perhaps, to the peaceable and industrious habits of my progenitors, had been allowed to descend from father to son for several generations.

The local situation of my natal-spot, at a

considerable distance from any large town, and the nature of my father's employment (a principal part of the work on the farm being performed by himself), left him few opportunities and little leisure for what is termed knowing the world. With the exception, therefore, of what might be acquired by going twice or thrice in a year to a cattle fair, attending a village funeral, or mixing with the parishioners on a Sunday, my father was a stranger to men, their manners, and their ways.

My mother, whom my father had married when both were pretty far advanced in years, was, in her own opinion and also in that of some others, a smart, active, ever bustling woman; with this additional qualification, that while her hands were generally employed her mind was never idle, and her tongue almost incessantly in motion. Her opinions were often rashly formed, but most tenaciously maintained: thus, in debating upon whatever she imagined likely to promote her interest or gratify her inclinations, she commonly mistook obstinacy for

firmness; and, although not always able to persuade others, she constantly succeeded in convincing herself, that she was perfectly in the right.

My father, on the contrary, was a man of slow conception and few words, little qualified and less inclined for argumentation; and generally, as my mother became more loquacious, his taciturnity increased in the same proportion. He would almost at any time have yielded the point in dispute, although conscious of being right, rather than have taken the trouble of defending it. The only exception within my recollection was, a contest which he had with a neighbour at our summer fair, about the comparative beauty, strength, and value of two *fillies*, reared on their respective farms.

From these few traits of my father and mother, it will perhaps naturally enough be conjectured that, according to the homely saying, the *gray mare was the better horse.* Probably it was so; but such was my father's placidity of temper, or so much had he been accustomed to the manner of his

helpmate, that things went on smoothly e-nough. Not but that slight wranglings would sometimes occur, in which case my mother's utterance always acquired a kind of *allegro* movement, and her voice rose fully an *octave* higher; but then my father's immediately fell in the same proportion, and his responses were delivered in *adagio* time. Now this produced so unnatural a discord, that the *duet* was generally broken up by tacit, although mutual, consent; and by next meeting all was forgotten.

Let it not be imagined that I take a pleasure in exposing the foibles of my parents. What I have said was necessary to illustrate my own history; for their manners and habits were not without their influence upon their first-born and only son, who now lives to record himself the last of his race.

CHAPTER II.

A glorious boy, he cried, and what the name?

CRABBE.

I WAS born early in the spring of 1746, a year famous in the annals of Britain for the happy termination of a rebellion, fomented by faction, and headed by a romantic youth for the recovery of what he conceived to be his paternal right.

It was on a cold, raw, frosty morning, while my father was in the act of leading gray Dobbin from the stable, that the area before his door was suddenly filled with dragoons. —A subaltern officer rode up, and told my father that he must immediately have his horses, carts, and servants, for the conveyance of his Majesty's stores to the next market town. My father replied, that without doubt his Majesty had a just claim to his best services, and that for King George he would most willingly hazard his

life; but that at present he was about to employ this horse on a service, which he would not renounce for *all the kings in Christendom!* "Bravo!" said the officer, "what may this important service be?" "To fetch a midwife," replied my father:— "my wife is at this moment in labour;"— pointing, at the same time, to a room where my mother leaned against the window. "All this may be very true," said the trooper; "but you must go on foot, for we want your horse this instant;" and he seized Dobbin by the *branks.*

My father, although slow in speech, was acute in feeling:—high words had ensued,— when an officer, apparently of high rank, riding up, thus accosted my father: "My brave fellow, I excuse your warmth on account of its cause: we shall easily agree; your horse, altho' fit for the draught, does not seem formed for expedition, will proceed with our stores; and as neither your case nor mine will allow time for deliberation, point out the road to the midwife's residence, and Jack there (pointing to a

dragoon,) shall fetch her in a twinkling." The distance was about three miles, and away scampered the dragoon. The handmaid of Lucina, who was verging on her grand climacteric, unaccustomed to a groom in armour, refused to mount the charger; but an oath from the dragoon, intimating, that unless she got up immediately a whole troop should be sent to fetch her, soon produced a compliance. By the assistance of a neighbour she was seated, and instructed to hold fast. But the horse, although perfectly well bred, and sufficiently skilled in military manœuvres, had not been accustomed to carry double; and as Mrs Midnight's dimensions, as well as specific gravity, were very considerable, the generous but indignant charger conceived that her pressure was an attack upon his rear, and consequently wheeled, capered, and curvetted, most gallantly. However, his rider, an adept in equestrian exercises, admonished his charge to keep fast hold of him, and there would be no danger. This injunction was complied with from a kind

of convulsive fear; and by the time that they reached my father's door, her hands were so firmly clinched in the trooper's belts, and so completely had she been unnerved, that she could not loosen her hold. Being assisted to alight, and led into the house, instead of approaching my mother, she dropt on the floor in a fit. What was now to be done? It was a critical moment, upon which my future fate was suspended. My mother required immediate assistance, and my father ran out of doors, wringing his hands, exclaiming in the agony of grief, that his wife would perish; and, in the bitterness of his heart, cursing all constituted authorities, whose interference had placed him in so distressful a situation.

The superior officer already mentioned, who still remained in the court urging the despatch of the carts, said to my father, upon learning the case, "My good fellow, we have one more resource;—my surgeon is just coming up;—he *can* and will assist your wife. I shall send an express for him; go and prepare the poor woman for his appear-

ance,—tell her, he is also a clergyman, and acts as my chaplain. This will reconcile her a little. Her's is no situation for false delicacy:—for your own sake therefore and hers, I beg you will advise her to be calm, and all I hope will soon be well.

The surgeon arrives,—necessity has no law,—my mother submits,—and in ten minutes the humble subject of these memoirs is introduced into the world, a free denizen to all the rights, privileges, immunities, pains and penalties, that mortal flesh is heir to, by the attendant surgeon of his Royal Highness, William, Duke of Cumberland.

When my mother, who had behaved with surprising fortitude, was put to bed, his Royal Highness shook hands with her; wished her joy of her first-born son; took me in his arms; and, on putting me down, deposited on the bed beside my mother a purse of ten guineas to begin my education; adding, that he had no doubt I should be a great man.

When the duke and his retinue had departed, the peculiarities attending my birth

afforded an almost inexhaustible fund of conversation for the gossips who now surrounded my mother; and the duke's assertion, that I should be a great man, was echoed about till it made my mother's head ache, although there is some reason to believe that it produced a more delightful sensation in her heart.

At the feast given on my mother's recovery, which in that part of the country was termed the *up-drinking*, it was discussed in full divan, whether I should arrive at my dignity in the church or the army; for, it being implicitly believed, that the obstetric operator who ushered me to the light was his Royal Highness's chaplain, it appeared very probable (as they said) that I would take after him: others were of opinion, that as I appeared a stout fellow, and of a very restless disposition, I should be a great general.

Although the progress of the royal and rebel armies afforded subject of talk for the public at that time, yet in a country village, the circumstances of my mother's *accouche-*

ment were so remarkable, that fame always introduced them, either as an episode or sequel to more important events. In a week or two after, the whole, with considerable exaggerations, were repeated to my maternal uncle, who lived (as it is termed with us) in "the *mou'* of the Highlands." This uncle, though very cautious, was at heart a staunch Jacobite. Prudence had prevented him from joining the standard of the Pretender; but he most anxiously anticipated the day when his sentiments could be declared with perfect safety; and he earnestly prayed for that success which he wanted the courage to promote. The news of my birth, therefore, had no sooner reached him, than he made my mother a friendly visit; and, after the usual compliments, the following dialogue took place:

"Weel sister, I'm glad to see you sae weel recovered; wha was your *canny-wife?*" My mother blushed without speaking.

"Ay! nae wonder that you dinna like to speak; but I hae heard the particulars. My wife wad hae died before the like should hae happened to her!"

My mother was sometimes *blessed*, but oftener *cursed*, with a ready wit: my uncle had no children, and his wife was now aged. My mother therefore very promptly replied: "Indeed, brither, ye're right—she'll die before the like happens to her!"

"Jeer on, Mary, ye may come to repent it! An' sae ye really an' truly had the assistance o' an English sodger?"

"Deed had I, brither."

"Weel, I say't again, you ought to hae died sooner than submit to sic vile degradation! But you were hansumely treated, I'm tauld, by that miscreant the Duke of Cumberland.—Did he really help in bringing the bairn to the warld?"

"Brither, we'll drap the subject, if ye like."

"Wi' a' my heart, gin you'll but say that ye repent."

"I hae naething to repent o',—what happened was a matter o' necessity, and no o' choice."

"They say he gied ye a purse wi' a hunder guineas in't?

"He shook hands wi' me, an' left ten guineas to my bairn."

"Ten guineas! I wad hae thrown them in his face!"

"I was nae sic fool, brither; ten guineas are ay ten guineas!"

Weel, weel! some fowk are fools, an' will be; but had the Royal Stranger (ye ken wha I mean) had the same opportunity, he wad ne'er hae disgraced himsel' in sic a manner."

"Dear brither, for your ain sake, let that subject alane, an', if possible, change your mind."

"Change my mind! an' desert my prince!"

"Desert your prince! weel said—hae nae ye denied him already? If ye haud him sae dear, why dinna ye join him; an' help him to recover his rights?"

"Mary, there are mony reasons."

"Nae doubt, brither, I can guess your reasons, but we hae gane ower the subject before now; I hae aften entreated ye to turn your heart to King George, your lawful

sovereign, an' now I beg of you to do it from interest, for you'll ne'er see the royal stranger, as you ca' him, king of Scotland."

"I'll see him king, an' you his subject!"

"God forbid!"

"For shame, Mary! but there's eneugh said.—Is your son baptized?"

"No."

"What are you to ca' him?"

"We hinna resolved yet."

"That's right; ca' him Charlie! an' I sall gi'e him twa lambs, an' girse them till they produce him a score."

"I winna promise, brither."

"Ye winna! Oh! I forgot; ye'll be to ca' him Willie?"

"An' what if we do? is there ony harm in that, brither?"

"Brither! ca' me nae mair brither!—for I tell you at anes, Mary, if ye ca' that gyte lyin in your bosom Willie, you are nae sister of mine! An', d'ye hear? ye ken I've nae bairns o' my ain; an' altho' it's an auld bye-word, that blude's thicker than water, if ye ca' that bairn Willie, I wad sooner ca'

ilka horn an' hoof that belangs to me o'er the craig o' Drumscarlie, than let him be a single bawbee the better o' them! Mind what I tell ye, Mary;—but ca' him Charlie an' its a' his ain when I die."

Contrary to her usual custom, my mother made no reply; and my uncle took his departure, having neither received nor communicated pleasure by his visit. My mother was one of that class which may be led, but will not be driven. Besides, I believe she was as sincerely attached to the house of Brunswick as her brother was to the unfortunate Stuarts: I was therefore baptized by the name of William.

CHAPTER III.

Right well she knew each temper to descry,
To thwart the proud and the submiss to raise;
Some with vile copper prize exalt on high,
And some entice with pittance small of praise.
SHENSTONE.

In my fourth year I was sent to a school in the village, kept by an old maid whose cheek had been fanned by the summer breeze for something more than half a century. She had a profusion of carrotty locks waving round a very short neck, squinted most hideously, and was about four feet and a half in perpendicular height.

She taught English, with a broad Scotch accent, in the following order, A, B, C, Proverbs of Solomon, New Testament, and lastly, what she termed the Bible; viz. from Genesis to Malachi inclusive, always saving and excepting some chapters in Chronicles and Nehemiah, which being, as she said, *Latin*, she did not pretend to teach.

The girls were taught to hem, stitch, and dearn. She had a great deal of small talk suited to the capacities of her pupils, and an inexhaustible collection of legendary and fairy tales, with which she enlivened our imaginations, and increased our credulity in proportion as she diminished our courage. For I sincerely believe, that not one of her pupils would have entered a room alone when it was dark, unless a friend was there before.

By the time I was six years of age I could read the Bible (saving and excepting as aforesaid), and repeat the Shorter Catechism, with all the Scripture Proofs, without misquoting either chapter or verse. I could almost say, or sing, most monotonously, about two dozen of the Psalms of David, one of which was the 119th. The schoolmistress now declared that I was *prodecjusly* clever, had all the *eddycashon* she could give me, an' that it would be a *saul* sin not to follow out my *genus* an' mak me a minister. By this time I had a sister about three years

of age; she was the last produce of that vine, which, although afterwards barren, continued to vegetate vigorously.

I was now sent to the parish school to learn writing and arithmetic. The schoolmaster, although not at the head of his profession, was at least a respectable teacher; he was a tolerable scholar and a good man, with few peculiarities, except those naturally arising from the unremitted routine of a task, in the discharge of which he had grown old without becoming rich. His dignity of manner, and propriety of behaviour, were, however, such as preserved the general respect of the parishioners for him and his family.

After about three years attendance here, I was pronounced the cleverest boy in the school; which, by-the-bye, was no proof of superior intellect, or even of sedulous application. The teacher's greatest failing was indolence; he had no hopes to stimulate him; his character and situation for life were fixed; he saw himself condemned to vegetate and die on the same spot.

Without gross misconduct he could not sink lower; and no exertion, at his time of life, could raise him one degree higher, either in the scale of wealth, rank, or respectability. Hence he went through his duty in an easy, formal manner; and the ardour which he felt not himself, he had ceased to excite in his pupils. Being now of an age when memory could record my transactions and feelings, I recollect that I did endeavour to keep at the head of my companions in the performance of our tasks; but, satisfied with this, I never endeavoured to go beyond them. They were generally idle; and my true character was of being only less so than the rest. Not that I was without pride, but unfortunately it took a wrong direction; for I often felt more proud of being able to assist my older and idler companions, than in acquiring that knowledge in which I was still defective. However, my progress appeared to give the master much satisfaction; and as two or three boys were to enter into the Latin after next vacation, he proposed to

my parents that I should join them. To this proposition my father gave a decided negative: my mother, on the contrary, was exceedingly keen that I should be a great man; for every body said, what she herself knew, that I was a wonderful scholar, and only wanted Latin to make me a gentleman.

Many were the conferences held between my parents on this important subject. Both were tenacious of their respective opinions; and as there was no middle way, there appeared no probability of the point being adjusted.

"What use," said my father, "will Latin be to Willie in hauding the pleugh, or in selling *stots* at a fair? Will he raise any better corn than his neeburs, because he can tell the name of it in Latin? I understand it will tak five or sax years to *perfyte* him in that language.—Is nae that as muckle time flung awa'? Lang before that he should be doing something on the farm, an' becoming acquainted wi' the

nature o' the business that he is likely to get his bread by. I dinna wish to mak him a slave; but *learn young, learn fair*; and I wish him gradually, an' o' his ain accord, to tak a liking to his faither's occupation."

"An' why," interrupted my mother, "should he be forced to drudge, an' toil, an' sweat, every day of his life, merely to live as we do, which, God kens, is soberly eneugh, when every body sees that he has a *genus*, an' will mak himsel a gentleman, if we dinna prevent him by the want of a proper education?"

Such was the substance of their respective arguments, often reiterated under different forms, and without carrying conviction to either party, or producing any mutual concessions.

About this time my maternal grandmother, a widow about eighty years of age, was taken ill, and having a little property, our family expected something at her death. Ever since I had been able to repeat the Catechism and Psalms by rote, her fondness

for me had verged upon dotage. At the present crisis, my mother availed herself of this, in furtherance of her own plans.

A will was executed by old *granny*, by which two hundred merks were left to my sister, and four hundred to me, to educate me for the ministry. But in the event of either my parents or myself declining to apply this bequest according to the intentions of the testatrix, the whole six hundred merks went to another family.

This gave my mother such a decided advantage, as placed my father and his arguments completely in the back ground. "Now," said my mother exultingly, "will ye still oppose a plan so muckle for Willie's guid,—now that ye see Providence itself is directly favouring the design? Indeed, we canna oppose it without being guilty o' a great sin: he's may be ordeened for a *burning an' a shining light;* an' ye wish to *put it under a bushel.* There is the ten guineas frae the duke, God bless him! and my worthy mither's legacy, will, I daur say, put the *laddie* to the college

without costing you a fardin; but, although that werena the case, I am sure that before I wad, like you, grudge the expense, I wad rather toil the flesh aff my finger-banes for my bairn!".

My mother had waxed warm, and her expressions were unguarded. My father, still anxious to convince rather than to conquer, replied:

"Mary, you will really mak me angry; you are discontented wi' your ain lot; you accuse me o' being niggardly; and are laith to hear ony reason that may be gien again' your opinion. Your situation is at least as comfortable as that of ony o' your *forbears*, or even mony o' our neeburs wha haud their heads higher. I am nae niggard, either to Willie or to ony part o' the family, as far's prudence will allow, and to forward him in life I wad do every thing in my power; but you and I differ about the means. Our *bit* land, though little, wad mak him comfortable; the laird's family and ours hae come on thegither frae generation to generation, and

there's now a sort of natural liking between us. I hope to be spared till such time as Willie's fit to work the farm; and I'm sure there's no ane o' the family but what wad let him hae a better bargain o't than ony ither.

"The steading's in gude order, and, wi' the assistance we may then be able to gie him, he should leeve very respectably. As to your making the laddie a minister, I hae nae objection to the trade, God forbid! and I hae nae doubt o' his abilities, for he promises fair according to his *upcome:* neither wad I grudge the expense of his education; but, 'deed, Mary, I see mair ministers than kirks. Ye ken, that it requires *moyen* and gude friends to get a birth amang the clergy; and we hae nae ane to apply to wha can do ony thing for Willie. Our laird's no a parliamenter, and has very little connexion with the *grytc* gentry, sae we need count naithing upon him. Now, say that the laddie's colleged, and leecenced to preach, what's he to do till he get a kirk, if ever he should be sae fortunate? and how

mony are there that never get a kirk, at a'? fain to *win* the length of a dominie, and wring out their lives in a parish school; a greater drudgery and waur paid than mine! Education's a gude thing; but now-a-days, I fear, there's o'er mony that trust to it for their bread; for although book-learning puts plenty into their heads, yet should they find nae employment, a thread-bare coat, and a *toom wame*, will mak but a *bauch* gentleman. I'm no at a' against a man raising himsel in the warld; if he has the power o' doing it honourably, it is his duty; but I am quite clear that every man, wha has nae fortin to leeve on, should be qualified to wun his bread by his ain labour, and then, happen what will, provided he keep his health, he canna be a beggar."

Notwithstanding all my father's arguments, my mother remained wedded to her own opinion; the schoolmaster and some others being occasionally called in as auxiliaries. I was also consulted by both parties; but my mother having so strongly impressed it upon my mind that I was a prodigy

of genius, and that I could not fail of being a great man, although I did not wish to offend my father, yet I expressed my inclination to learn Latin. He continued obstinate; my mother grew sullen, and ultimately sick; disappointed hope had also begun to pluck the roses from my cheek, and I became mopish and unhappy. In this dilemma my father knew hardly what to do; suffice it to say, that the situation of my mother, and not the weight of her arguments, extorted his reluctant consent.

I began my attack upon *hic haec hoc;* my mother recovered her health and spirits; old granny died, and her bequests were ready to be paid over on the day that I should begin to study divinity. My master was a good Latin scholar; and, I believe, my progress and proficiency were not discreditable to either of us. At the same time I acquired the elements of Geometry. The vanity of my mother, and her ambition to dignify her family, by making me a minister, now began to produce, at least, one good effect; it gave a

stimulus to my exertions, and I studied Latin with great and constant assiduity; foolishly believing, that I had only to make myself master of that language, and little more time and trouble were necessary to qualify me for being a minister.

Being now pronounced fit for the university, I took my departure for not the least celebrated of those establishments, from which have issued so many of the giants of literature, and which have long been venerated by the people of Scotland. My mother had so fluently descanted upon my genius, and other equally competent judges had so often echoed her sayings, that I had, in the vanity of my heart, given them full credit for their discernment. However, in the Greek class which I entered, there were several lads, whose facility in performing their exercises rendered me a little sceptical about my own abilities; for it required the most unremitted application to keep pace with them. I was compelled to feel my own inferiority, and my pride was alarmed; for the painful convic-

tion shot across my mind, that I had hitherto trifled away my time. I therefore began to think as a man; and felt that I must prosecute my studies with assiduity and perseverance, if I wished either to profit by them, or acquire respectability as a scholar.

I still reflect with gratitude upon the attention and encouragement that I received from the different professors. Here, as at school, I likewise saw idlers, some from indolence, and others from the giddy love of pleasure. My recreation from study consisted chiefly in walking, which was conducive to health, and had no tendency to vitiate the mind. My father's circumstances in life were by no means affluent; nor, had they been more so, would he have wished that I should have much pocket money, which, as he well knew, among youthful and unthinking companions, only furnish the means of indulging in follies or vice.

It was fortunate for me that he judged so prudently; for, I must acknowledge, I sometimes sighed to join my fellow-stu-

dents in parties of pleasure, from which I was prevented only by the limited state of my finances.

It was expected by my mother, that at college I would be able to form an acquaintance with some lord or great man's son, who might have both the power and inclination to render me essential service. In fine, that I should, by my transcendant merit, acquire

Some patron kind
To bless me wi' a kirk!

But unfortunately there were no lords nor lords' sons at the university during my stay at that seminary.

During my stay at college I took the degree of Master of Arts, and at length came home with empty pockets, and my head full of logic and divinity. In a short time I delivered my first public discourse, which drew compliments from some of my reverend judges, and passed without censure from the rest. Shortly after this I was licensed a preacher

of the gospel, and thus fairly launched into the ocean of life. I felt that it was a voyage of adventure; but youth is not the season for despondency, and if my heart was not elated with hope, neither was it easily depressed by disappointment.

My father's house, though well enough adapted for his accommodation, afforded little convenience for private study. I have already said, that my mother was the reverse of the *silent woman*, and her loquacity now became troublesome to me in more ways than one. Her incessant volubility of tongue, distracted and disorganized my ideas in the most private recess I could find; but still worse, I was her only son, and, I verily believe that, had a bishop's mitre or a cardinal's hat been attainable in the church of Scotland, she would have imagined them ready to drop upon my head. Still, all this might have been of little consequence, had she kept it within her own bosom; but what she felt she too often expressed, with so little attention to time or place, that I was the daily burden of her song, and the object of her constant adoration.

After a residence of a few weeks, I preached publicly on a Sunday, for the first time, in my native parish, and went through the service with tolerable ease and confidence. The church was crowded, and I have no doubt that the greater part of the audience sat in judgment on my performance after they returned home. During the week, my mother teased every body that she met with the question, "Weel, what thought you of my Willie on Sunday?" This question being sometimes put in my presence, I began to be seriously angry with her, as this fondness had an obvious tendency to make me ridiculous. I remonstrated with her upon the impropriety of such conduct, and ultimately felt a necessity for insisting that she should not speak of me at all. But this injunction produced another evil; for, although a weak woman, she was a fond mother, and she now inferred that I was become so great as to be ashamed of my nearest relation.

It gave me pain to observe her feelings on this occasion; but what could I do? I endeavoured to convince her that I was

fully sensible of her affection for me, and that my remonstrances were dictated as much by filial respect as a regard to my own character, and begged to assure her, that she exposed both herself and me to public ridicule. But alas! her garrulity was incurable, and she felt it impossible to refrain from speaking of her son, interlarding her encomiums with querulous complaints that his affections were estranged from her.

CHAPTER IV.

Love should be pure,
Harmless as pilgrim's kisses on the shrines
Of virgin martyrs; holy as the thoughts
Of dying saints, when angels hover o'er them;
Harmonious, gentle, soft; such love should be,
The zephyr—not the whirlwind of the soul.

CUMBERLAND.

I HAD now continued at home about seven months, preaching occasionally for the clergymen in the neighbourhood; but as they considered this necessary for me, that I might acquire confidence, it was productive of nothing farther than a dinner on Sunday afternoon, or an occasional invitation from some of the most respectable inhabitants. I soon, therefore, began to be weary of this idleness. Along with the donations already mentioned, my parents had expended a considerable sum in the completion of my education; and

this circumstance, with prospects by no means flattering, gave me at times considerable uneasiness. My father, however, never grumbled; and I rather think he guessed the state of my feelings, and pitied me. Still it was painful for me to see him toiling from morning to night while I was doing nothing, and literally walking about like a gentleman:—I therefore became determined, whatever might be my fate, to be no longer a burden on my industrious parents. To be a tutor in a gentleman's family I considered as a desirable situation; but I was unknown, and had no one to introduce me to the public, much less to perform the friendly office of recommendation. A parish school was the next resource, in any application for which, I believed, my qualifications would be recommendation sufficient. Several advertisements for schoolmasters came under my eye; but they were all clogged with this discouraging postscript: "None intending the ministry need apply."

Just as I was beginning to despond, I was one morning very agreeably surprised

by my college friend, Mr L., riding up to me, as I sauntered near my father's house. He shook me by the hand so cordially, that I was convinced his heart was as unsophisticated as ever. After breakfasting together, he mentioned that he was on his way to visit Mr B., a country gentleman in the next county, and most warmly entreated me to accompany him. I knew that my father could not conveniently spare a horse for me; and mentioned this as my only objection. But my father observing my wishes, requested me to accompany my friend, and return as soon as possible. The day was fine, our ride pleasant, and we arrived in time to partake of a family dinner. Mr B. was a sensible, well-informed man: he had made the tour of Europe, and, from his manners and conversation, he appeared to have studied men and books with advantage. We remained all the following day, part of which was spent in walking over the pleasure-grounds.

Mr B. seemed anxious to lead me into conversation on different subjects. After

dinner, I observed that my friend very kindly led me to such topics as he knew I was capable of treating with credit to myself. We departed next morning; Mr L. separated from me by the way, and I reached home, much pleased with our little excursion.

After supper, my mother began to expatiate on the apparently good qualities of my friend, and added, that his abrupt departure only prevented her from soliciting his patronage and assistance for me; declaring, that should he ever call again, she would not lose the opportunity of so doing. I could not convince her of the impropriety of such a step, and had therefore peremptorily to insist on her silence on that subject. She became quite peevish, and wondered what was the use of great friends, if they could not be spoken to when their assistance was wanted.

Early in the following week, I received a letter from my friend, covering one from Mr B., in which the latter made me an offer of forty pounds per annum, with

bed, board, and washing, to reside in his house, and take charge of the education of his children. Mr L. solicited me, if I had no better prospects, (which he pretty well knew I had not,) to accept the offer; hinting, that Mr B.'s friendship might afterwards be of value. I communicated the letters to my parents, with an assurance of my own conviction, that my friend had first recommended, and then introduced me to Mr B., that the latter might so far see and judge for himself.

"Ay," said my mother; "I aye thought that Providence wad open a door for Willie."

I accepted the proposal, and departed with a father's blessing and advice. "Go, my son," said he, "I am no judge of your head, but am happy to think that you have a good heart, if a poor mortal creature's heart may be termed good. You are in the way of instructing others; and whether you teach in public or private, let your doctrine be adorned by your example. Always speak and act according to your conscience. Be-

ware of pride—but avoid meanness. The profession you have chosen requires regularity of conduct, and prudence in the choice of your companions and recreations. Let your first aim be, the faithful discharge of your several moral and religious duties, and let your amusements be only such as promote health of body and serenity of mind; and be assured, that temperance in every enjoyment will afford you the most pleasing and lasting relish. Flatter no man,—and be not zealous without discretion. Do your duty, and may God bless and prosper your honest endeavours!"

My reception at my new residence was more than polite: I felt that it was kind. The family consisted of Mr and Mrs B., with three sons, and two daughters; the two youngest boys, and one of the girls, were to be committed to my charge.

Were I not afraid of being tedious, I could say much of the happiness I for some time enjoyed, and had further promised myself, in this situation. Mr B., with evidently a high sense of the dignity of rank,

was affable and kind; treated me as a companion, and shewed me many marks of his esteem. Mrs B. was of a very ancient family, with many agreeable and estimable qualifications as a woman, a wife, and a mother: perhaps her most conspicuous foible was, being inclined (like her husband,) to appreciate rather too highly the advantages of birth and rank. Miss B., the eldest of the family, then in her seventeenth year, possessed a form and features capable of inspiring the admirers of female beauty with adoration; but these were only the ornaments of a casket, which contained a jewel of the brightest lustre and inestimable value. The amiable and winning sweetness of her manner would have commanded the services of a savage; while her native dignity of mind and manner would have won the libertine and the licentious to the love of virtue. Sensibility without affectation, and every female virtue without prudery, adorned and regulated her conduct.

The young squire, who had just com-

pleted his fifteenth year, although he possessed not all the virtues of his parents, appeared at least without the vices too prevalent among young men who know that they are born to be gentlemen of fortune; and his youthful character, if it did not inspire sanguine hopes, left little to fear.

My pupils were docile, but attentive to my instructions, and performed their tasks with facility, which made the discharge of my duty a pleasure; while their progress was both creditable to me, and satisfactory to their parents.

I have already said, that my treatment in the family was most respectful. At table, whoever were the guests, every one of the family endeavoured to make me forget that I was a dependant; while their behaviour would have prevented any one else from making the discovery. Such was now my happiness, that I could have been contented never to change my situation. Oh, halcyon days!—how sudden and how great the reverse! cruelly did I experience, that our

highest bliss is pregnant with the seeds of disappointment and sorrow!

I had now passed more than a year in this worthy family, my felicity increasing with the well-founded conviction; that I was rising in their esteem, and securing their friendship.

Before I left my father's, I had made myself master of the Italian language; and Miss B., who was a proficient in French, knew only so much of it, as to excite in her a desire for an intimate knowledge of a language so well suited to harmony and love, expressed a wish to her parents, that I should become her tutor. Solicitous to promote her improvement, and to contribute what appeared conducive to her happiness, they readily complied. We entered on the task; her progress was rapid; and it was doubtful whether the teacher or pupil had the greatest pleasure in our respective studies. In a very short time we read together Guacini, Metastasio, Tasso, and Ariosto, admiring and criticising as we proceeded.

Oh, dangerous association! Miss B. might have charmed an anchorite—I was a young fellow of twenty-four; and, I believe without vanity, of no despicable face and figure.

It is easy to anticipate the result. For a considerable time, the hours that were spent with Miss B. imparted a felicity beyond any other. I was conscious of this; and although I felt that it would have been a privation of happiness to lose this pleasure, yet I foolishly believed that I could easily suppress this cherished feeling, the moment it threatened to become dangerous to my peace. That time approached—and I felt the necessity of acting with promptitude and honour. Happily my pupil was by this time a proficient in the language; and although I felt the sacrifice infinitely greater than I had anticipated, I took the earliest opportunity of mentioning to her parents, in her presence, that she had no further occasion for my instructions.

She affirmed, that I was complimenting her, and insisted upon still receiving further assistance in the perusal of some works she

had lately procured. What could I do? Her studies were continued occasionally; while every interview convinced me of the absolute necessity of their termination.

One day, when she had finished her lesson, she took from her pocket a small edition of Petrarch, and asked me whether I had ever read that author; made some observations on his Laura; and requested my assistance in the translation of a sonnet which she admired. While we were at this exercise, she, as if by accident, laid her hand on mine, which was stretched on the table, and said, with a graceful sweetness peculiar to herself, "If you will have the goodness to assist me, we shall read all this volume together." I replied, that she did not require any assistance. "What have I done, Mr Campbell?" she then exclaimed, with unconscious warmth, "I have certainly offended you, and you wish to get rid of your pupil? You find me, I am afraid, an untractable scholar, and in some way disagreeable to you.—If so, I am sure it is far from my wishes.—I have felt very hap-

py,—obliged, I mean, by your patient and kind instructions." During this discourse I felt her hand tremble; our eyes met, and I observed a deep blush suffusing her cheek: My agitation became insupportable, when most fortunately, at this moment, from the window, I saw her youngest brother fall from a tree on the lawn. Starting, I exclaimed, "Ah, poor James!" and left the room with precipitation. The boy was not much injured; and my confusion was thus concealed, or attributed to my alarm for James. Petrarch was now almost her constant amusement, and I observed her fine eyes lighted up with a sensibility of expression, that diffused thrilling agonies through my frame.

She was in the practice of taking a morning walk in the woods surrounding the house; and although I studiously avoided meeting her in these excursions, yet, I will not deny, that I delighted in tracing the path she had trodden; and when I reached a seat she had recently quitted, I threw myself into it with a refinement of pleasure, that has perhaps been often felt, but cannot be

described. If she happened to leave a wild flower, or a sprig of a shrub behind her, I seized it with fondness, and hoarded it with a lover's care.

One morning, taking my walk, I saw her returning by another path; I plunged into the thicket, and hastened to a rustic seat which she had just left. A few paces from the seat, I observed a folded piece of paper lying, which I eagerly took up and unfolded. It was verses in her own hand-writing, and most probably had dropt from her pocket. It was not curiosity, but an irresistible impulse, that prompted a perusal.—What my sensations were upon reading the following lines may be easily conjectured.

TO THE WOOD PIGEON.

Thou emblem of unspotted love,
 Why thus with 'plainings load the gale?
Thy mate will meet thee in the grove,
 And whisper soft his tender tale.

Nor pride of birth, nor sordid gold,
 Can e'er thy fond affections bind;
No parent turn with glances cold,
 To keep thee from a kindred mind.

But I, by tyrant custom swayed,
Unheard, must heave the struggling sigh;
In secret seek the lonely shade,
And hide my love from every eye.

While he, whose image fills my heart,
My presence shuns with studious care;
Nor dare I even a smile impart,
To whisper he is monarch there.

Yet even in his averted eye
I trace the pangs of love suppressed;
The stolen glance and secret sigh,
Declare the anguish of his breast.

Thrice happy bird! had I thy power
To wing my flight to distant shores,
And nestle in some secret bower
With him my aching heart adores;

With William there, supremely blest,
Long years of love would glide away;
No pang should ever break our rest,
Nor cares disturb our closing day.

What a discovery was this to me! for there was no vanity in conceiving myself the subject of these verses. A number of previous circumstances rushed upon my recollection, and confirmed this conclusion. I was so lost in delirium, that my mind was for some time

a perfect chaos, in which transport and despair were so intimately blended as to defy separation. Reason and reflection at length resumed their ascendancy, only to shew me that summit of happiness within my reach which every sentiment of honour and gratitude interdicted me from approaching.

It is impossible to describe my sensations; I certainly did feel a pleasure in the consciousness of being beloved by her, for whom I would have deemed my life a trivial sacrifice; but it was agony to think that she was struggling with a passion, while every noble sentiment of my heart loudly remonstrated against my acknowledgment of its being mutual.

Never till now did I regret the want of rank and fortune; I reasoned with myself, resolved, and re-resolved. Before this discovery, I had determined that never, by look, word, or action, should the state of my heart be discovered. But I felt that this was now impossible; and I too clearly foresaw, that with all Mr B.'s amiable qualities, he never would consent to so unequal a match.

From even the momentary contemplation of a clandestine marriage my soul turned with indignation. The opinion of the world, and the most abject poverty, appeared to me as nothing, when put in the balance against her, who now reigned triumphant in my heart. But to degrade Maria B., the idol of my soul, in the eyes of that world,—to make her forfeit paternal affection, and render her a beggar—No! I would sooner have suffered a thousand deaths. Hence, the very affection I cherished for Miss B. forbade me to see her more. Imperious necessity, therefore, required that I should immediately renounce my situation. How could I do this without any previous notice? and what would appear still more extraordinary, shew no reason for leaving a family where I had uniformly experienced so much kindness and respect? I could hit upon no plausible reason; however, to gain time for deliberation, I solicited, and obtained leave to visit my father. Before the time of my expected return, I pretended indisposition, a plea which

was too well supported by my depressed spirits and melancholy appearance.

Mr B. solicited my return, assuring me, that I might live in the house in any way most agreeable to myself, till my health was re-established. But although my mind was harassed with a thousand distracting feelings, —concern for Miss B.—and respect for her father,—I continued inflexible in my resolution not to return, and pressed Mr B. to procure another tutor, that my former pupils might not be neglected: with this request, after waiting some time longer, he reluctantly complied.

Winter approached, and I heard, with inexpressible sorrow, that Miss B. was ill. One fine day in autumn she had walked to a considerable distance, when a sudden indication of approaching rain induced her to over-heat herself in the attempt to get home; but she was caught by the shower, thoroughly wetted,—and a severe cold was the consequence. A consumption was now seriously dreaded, both by her parents and the physician, and their fears were but too well found-

ed. Early in May, Maria's gentle spirit fled to happier regions; and her once beauteous and lovely form slept with the *clods of the valley*. I will not attempt to describe my feelings on this melancholy event. Reader, if thou hast ever loved, "thy heart will far forego my tale!"

More than forty years have passed away since Maria's eyes were closed for ever, and time has long since mellowed my sorrows; but memory still dwells with melancholy delight on her angelic virtues. Often, "in the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men," her lovely form appears before me, such as it was when the rose blushed on her dimpling cheek, and the glance of secret love melted in her eye.

Amidst all the vicissitudes of life, which I have yet to record, these are moments pregnant with felicity, pure and unalloyed as can be tasted on earth. Amiable spirit! continue thy visitations a little longer! the time, I trust, is not far distant, when we shall meet to part no more!

CHAPTER V.

Now Richard's talents for the world were fit,
He'd no small cunning, and had some small wit:
Had but one care, and that he strove to hide,
How best for Richard Monday to provide.

CRABBE.

A SHORT while after the untimely death of Maria B., I received the following letter from her father.

"Dear Sir,—I hardly know in what terms to address you, conscious that words cannot express my feelings. A recurrence to the recent melancholy change in my family, I have now reason to believe, will be as painful to you as I feel it is to myself; but there is a duty that I owe both to the dead and the living, which I am anxious to discharge: this I shall endeavour to do in as few words as possible.

"A few days before her death, our dear

Maria, after soliciting my confidence and earnest attention, spoke to me of herself and of you, and the motives of your sudden and (till then) unaccountable departure, were fully explained. I always thought highly of you, but now find that I had still far under-rated your merit. The man who could make such a sacrifice is deserving of my highest esteem,—was worthy of being my son. Maria requested me to convey to you her blessing and most affectionate farewell. 'Tell William,' said she, 'that he has the last and best wishes of a susceptible, but spotless heart.' My heart is now too full to continue the subject; therefore accept of my best wishes for your happiness, and rely upon the friendship of, dear sir, yours sincerely, C. B."

This letter served to cherish feelings which it was my duty, although not my inclination, to suppress. For some time my health was impaired and my spirits dejected, but by slow degrees I so far recovered both, as to become, in some measure, anxious about my future mode of life. Mr B. had

promised me his friendship; I knew his influence, and could confide in his word; but a long time might elapse before it was in his power to serve me.

About this period my sister was married to a Mr Smith, a young man of a speculative turn of mind, with no property and as little experience; sanguine in his expectations, and volatile in his pursuits. Being the son of a neighbour, and also a school-acquaintance, we had kept up an occasional intercourse, which, since my return to my father's, had been more frequent.

I have perhaps too often mentioned my mother's fondness and partiality for her only son: alas! that partiality prevented her from doubting the principles and prudence of those who claimed the privilege of visiting me. My sister was not less an object of maternal regard; but it was a blind and unsuspecting fondness, instead of a prudent and watchful care. Young, healthy, and tolerably handsome, my sister had attratced the notice of several young men in the neighbourhood, and might have made a

more prudent match; but, from the frequent opportunities Mr S. had of being in her company, a marriage became necessary, as the only means of reparation to an unthinking, giddy, and credulous girl, who was brought to the brink of infamy. Mr Smith had just taken a lease of about an hundred acres of indifferent land, at a high rent, and my father had to assist him in stocking the farm. I did not approve of the match, but under existing circumstances, it was the only alternative.

This event again threw a damp upon my reviving spirits; and, as misfortunes seldom come single, a new cause of disappointment and sorrow soon followed. My worthy and much respected friend, Mr B., had been visiting a distant part of his estate. While sitting carelessly on horseback, conversing with one of his tenants, his horse was startled by the sudden flapping of a door, and he pitched upon his head with such violence, that he died in a few hours. My college companion, Mr L., had just sailed for India, and I was left

without a friend to counsel or console me in the day of my disappointed hope.

I was just about to remove to the town of ———, and try my success as a teacher, when I received a letter from Sir Peter Lightfoot, a gentleman in a neighbouring county, requesting me to state the terms upon which I would act as tutor in his family. I knew but little of the Knight, and that little was not greatly to his advantage: however, as I was really anxious to obtain a situation, I made up my mind to the little *disagreeables* that I anticipated, resolving, that if my terms were accepted, to discharge my duty in such a manner as to obtain civility, if not respect, from the family.

Some twenty years before the period of which I write, Sir Peter had left a distant part of Scotland, the barefooted journeyman of a highland drover; and having once turned his back on his native country, he was in no great haste to revisit it. He still held his head to the south, till he had reached the metropolis of England; where,

after a variety of adventures and gradations in life, he became shopman to Ben Burton, a slop-seller in the neighbourhood of Wapping. This slop-seller, by industry and the *allowable* acts of his business, had amassed a capital of £10,000, and besides, possessed a bouncing wife, of a rosy complexion, with that degree of *en bon point* which the Dutch and Chinese admire as the perfection of female beauty; and a daughter almost as tall as a May pole, who, from associating with sailors, had acquired a remarkable fluency, and easy confidence in conversation. Mr Ben Burton was just upon the eve of retiring from business, at the suggestion of his help-mate, and was on terms for a snug rural box in the country, where they intended to enjoy life; when, one evening, after a hearty supper of oysters and Gloucester cheese, washed down with a due proportion of Hollands, and two pipes of cut and dry by way of a dessert, he went to bed, fell asleep, and awoke no more. Mrs Burton was inconsolable for nearly two hours: and it was not till after

breakfast that she could give directions about the funeral. The last duties paid to her dear and ever-to-be-lamented husband, she proposed to her shopman to remain in his office, till she should determine whether she would continue or renounce business, Peter was active and prudent; the shop gave excellent returns; and Mrs Burton began to think within herself, that Peter might be able to afford her sufficient consolation for her loss. Peter had also felt similar ideas floating in his mind, and might have had no great objections, had not Miss Burton's fresher cheek and easy smiles made the balance of his affection waver between the mother and daughter; so that, for some time, he found himself nearly in the situation that the schoolmen represent the ass between the two bundles of hay. But Peter, although no anchorite, was always cool and prudent; he therefore waited till he should discover whether the mother's reversion, or the daughter's portion, was likely to preponderate. Mrs Burton being in a greater haste than Peter,

took an early opportunity, one evening, in a kind of *tete-a-tete* conversation, to hint, that if Bess married to her mind, she would give her £5000, and reserve an equal sum to keep herself comfortable in her now forlorn state.

Here was a new dilemma for Peter;—the fortunes were equal; and he was quite uncertain whether the widow wished him to marry Bess or herself. He went to bed,—but not to sleep; consulted his pillow, and rose with a firm resolution to give the preference to youth and beauty; for it never entered into Peter's calculations that he could be refused by either of the ladies. Miss Burton was not only easy in her manner, but had also a little of the coquette in her composition; not that she wanted good sense, but her associations in life had precluded that delicacy which she would otherwise have possessed. She could joke, rattle, laugh, and jeer, till even Peter imagined her nothing loth;—but, alas! poor Peter, like many others, persuaded himself

that she laughed *with* him, when she was only laughing *at* him.

Chance often overturns our wisest plans; or, as Burns expresses it—

> "The best laid schemes of mice and men
> Gang aft a gley."

So it was here.—One evening when Mrs Burton was out at tea, Miss Burton entered the shop, and Peter very respectfully solicited a short conference in the back shop. Miss Burton had some presentiment (from Peter's previous behaviour to her,) of the subject now to be introduced; however, fond of a joke, she smiled compliance, and at Peter's request seated herself beside him at a snug fire. As a preliminary to the intended treaty, Peter had very lovingly encircled her waist with his arm, and with a gentle violence was endeavouring to make her head rest on his shoulder; when, at this most critical moment, the door opened, and in popped Mrs Burton's broad face, like a harvest full moon just emerging above the horizon.

Some awkward apologies were stammered out by Peter, about Miss Burton's being suddenly taken ill. The prudent mother affected to believe them; conducted her daughter up stairs; put her to bed,—and then waddled down to take the chair just vacated in the back shop. Mrs Burton, accustomed to business, immediately called in her deputy retailer of trowsers and tar brushes; told him, in few words, that she saw how the land lay; but that if he knew his own interest, of which she had no doubt, he would put about ship; for, in short, Bess might or might not have a fortune,—that was just as she (her mother) pleased; but she would tell him once for all, that if he married Bess, he should never finger a guinea, till it was sweated out through all the forms that the delay and chicane of the law would allow. But to make him amends for this disappointment, she had a good round sum entirely at her own disposal, exclusive of a well-stocked shop and warehouse, which, with her own person, hale and healthy, and very little the

worse for wear, besides a brisk lucrative business, she now offered for his acceptance; Yes or no was the word! she hated dilly-dallying. If he thought well of the matter, they would be married next week; if he had better prospects, she was too much his friend to detain him from them, and he should be discharged to-morrow morning.

Peter, recollecting the proverb, "*Strike the iron while it is hot,*" gave a frank or well feigned assent; shook the widow by the hand; and sealed the contract by a hearty smack on her purple lips.

Preliminaries thus adjusted, a definitive treaty followed, which was legally executed by the contracting parties on the Monday following. Peter was put in full possession of the premises left by the defunct; the quondam Mrs Burton, now Mrs Lightfoot, stickled hard for an immediate retirement from the fatigues of business; but Peter replied, that he was still in the prime of life, and must do something in the way of business, which was the duty of every man at the head of a family. However, they re-

moved to a more respectable quarter of the city; business was extended; Peter arrived at civic honours; became a contractor with government; dashed into speculations which turned out fortunate; dabbled in the stocks; and, on a particular occasion, had the honour of kneeling before his Majesty, and rising Sir Peter Lightfoot. He was now the father of three children, and Lady Lightfoot again sighed for retirement and the sweets of rural life. Although Sir Peter's ruling passion was avarice, or at least money-making, yet some circumstances, which were never elucidated, loosened his attachment to the city, and he graciously complied with the wishes of his lady.—Seeing the Scotch estate of Bramblebrae advertised for sale, he became the purchaser,—dashed down to his native hills, which he had never visited since he crossed them barefooted with the Highland drover,—took possession of his estate, and became the greatest man within a circle of twenty miles around him.

Such were the master and mistress of the

mansion in which I was now to reside, (for my terms were accepted,) and I entered upon my charge, not from choice, but necessity.

Upon inquiring what course of studies it was intended my pupils should follow, I was edified with the following lecture from Sir Peter:

"Why, sir, I can't say as how that I am up to all your outlandish terms, and them there things that they palaver about at the cadameys, howsomdever, I thinks I knows a thing or two. Yes, sir, I knows the needful, and have looked after the ready.—Before I purchased this here estate, my right worshipful and honourable friend, the Lord Mayor of London, one day after dinner, in talking about our families, mentioned a prodigious famous teacher, that, he said, should be attended by every young man, he called him Matthew Mattocks, and that he learned jometry, and God knows all what. He also said, says he, every one who wants to make a figure now-a-days, should be acquainted with Bell Letter.

bit my lips to keep off a smile, knowing that his worship was fond of a pretty girl; and was convinced, that although I had never before heard of Bell Letter, she was a wench no better than she should be. All this may be very well, says I to myself; for I did not persume to contradict his lordship's worship; but, says I to myself again, what I now say to you, sir, That may do for Tom, who is to be bred for a gentleman; but Dick's eddycashun must not be neglected this way. Therefore, you see, sir, Tom, as I have said, being, as I may say, born a gentleman, you will please contrive, sir, to stuff into his head all your foreign lingas, stronomy, jugraphy, and history, not forgetting spelling and grammar, that he may be qualified for a public speaker; for I am resolved Tom shall go into the house. But as for Dick, he must go another guess-way to work; learn him to write a good fist, and make him master of Cocker's Arithmetic. Them things, that I have talked of for Tom, may be the go; but figures, sir, figures are the needful; Dick must learn

to turn the penny and make the ready; and mind me, sir, be sure you put him up to fractions; fractions of a penny, sir, are the seeds of guineas. Let me tell you, sir, it cost me no little pains to understand them; but they have put many a good pound in my pocket since! Gadso! I had almost forgot interest! be sure you attend to that. O, sir, had I been up to compound interest, I don't know what I might have been by now! I would also add a perfect knowledge of the stocks, consols, amnum, and chequer bills; do you understand me? I am afraid not, you have had little to do in that way I suppose! I must learn Dick them things myself. In looking over the list of professors at college, I find there's one who learns the collegeners humanity; but none of my boys shall meddle with that! Many's the time and oft I've been bothered with beggars and bankrupts, snivelling about me wanting humanity; but I found the less humanity that I was guilty of, I had the fewer bad debts on my ledger: therefore, I say, no humanity for Dick.

Tom may get a slight sketch of the subject, so as to be able to talk about it; but, mind me, don't learn him the practice. We must consult Lady Lightfoot respecting Sally, she knows what's most properest, more betterer than I."

The bell was rung, and in due time Lady Lightfoot appeared, with a rotundity of shape that might have qualified her for being the counterpart of Falstaff. She seated herself on a sofa that literally groaned with its burden. She cast a slight glance at me, then elevating her eyes to an angle that would have divided the ceiling of the room, with her arms crossed on a prominence covered with silks that rustled as she moved, and assuming great dignity of manner, her ladyship delivered herself in these polite and elegant terms:

"Sir Peter Lightfoot, you knows wery vell, as how, that this here Mr What-d'ye-call-'um, is not by no means the sort of tutor I would have chused for Sally. Nevertheless, Sir Peter, the gentleman knows vether he is qualified to be of sarvice to a

lady of fortune. Can you, sir, *parley wou Francey?* Are you master of spelling and swintaks? Can you teach her the dying fall of woice and melting eye, vith the delirious swell of the chest, ven she is reading sentential pieces? Can you teach her to write, not only incomprchensibly, but also vith bathos? Can you teach her to instruct maps, and twirl the globes, to shew the auntypods, and nokshus-line?" I, modestly but firmly, replied, "Madam, all these acquirements must be the work of time, but my best endeavours shall not be wanting." "Vell sir, we vill make trial of your abilities; but mind me, sir, you must not never, upon no account, go for to put none of your poetry books into her hands;—they ought all to be burned, so they should: and if ever you persume for to offer to leave any of them sort of trumpery lying about the room, off you pack! Heaven knows I have had more than enough of them there stuff already! You recollects the feller, Sir Peter, who used to wisit us in London, and who contrived to become hand and glove vith Miss Burton,—he

fetcht her Shakspeer, Tumson, Pope, Novurs and Haman's Love Ledgers. Ods bodkins! the girl's head vas wery near turned; she got a raving about Romys, and said she vould be his Julius. Then she fell to moping, for all the vorld like a chicken in the pip, and throwing herself into a most reflecting latitude, with a tone of woice just like Mrs Thingumbob's at Common Garden, repeated some lines from the mortal Shakspeer, as she called him, about never selling her love, but letting councilmen, like worms and birds, feed on her damson cheek;—and such like trash.—O if I had not been afeard for the extericks, it did my heart good to hear her. She talked also about a most beautiful pistol made by the Pope, that vas sent by Eliza to one Abel Hard along vith some verses, which she said vas most delicious poetry. Good gracious! I suspicioned she vould become non compas, and threw all the books over the vinder. Therefore, I say, none of your poetry stuff here! as to your playing the spinnet or arpsicol, that, I persume, is

not your fort, and I dares say is above your comperhension!

From this display of the taste and principles of Sir Peter and his lady, I had no great cause for congratulating myself on my situation; it was, however, necessary that I should make a fair trial.

I found my pupils ignorant, uncultivated, and forward and petulant in their manners; with a large stock of pride and vulgarity, which it was obvious they possessed by hereditary right. The little English they could read, was pronounced in a Cockney and Thames Street accent, so strange and uncouth, that for some time it sounded in my ears almost like an unknown tongue; and their attempts at writing required only a little aid from fancy to pass for Arabic: of every other branch of education they were totally ignorant.

Many were the foolish obstructions that were thrown in the way of their improvement by both parents. Sometimes Tom would mount his pony to take an airing, and not return till evening; and Dick would lose

himself in the woods while a bird-nesting; or get soused in a pool, and then have to go to bed to prevent his catching cold. Miss Sally had to go out one day with her mother in the chariot; and another to stay in the drawing-room to exhibit herself, when visitors arrived. But what had a worse effect than all this, nothing being esteemed at Bramble-brae except wealth and its accompaniments, I was treated with very little ceremony, and without even the external appearance of respect; and I am well convinced, that although Sir Isaac Newton had filled my place, without the appendage of his title, his reception would have been no better.

At table, it was obvious to all that I held my place only from sufferance; and there the general tendency of the conversation was, to depreciate and despise every degree of scientific or moral excellence, unless it were to be the means of acquiring wealth or external splendour. And when not actually employed with my pupils, several attempts

were made to degrade me into something very like a menial servant or errand boy.

What a contrast did my present situation form to that which I once held, in my lamented friend Mr B.'s family! Six months rolled on in tedious round; and as I found that the progress of my pupils was not likely to promote either my credit or satisfaction, I had just resolved upon intimating an intention of resigning my charge, when a most unexpected storm burst upon my head.

CHAPTER VI.

> Why Mistress Minion you!
> Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no prouds!
> Out you green sickness carrion! out you baggage!
> You tallow face!
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

Miss Burton, the daughter of Lady Lightfoot by her former husband, has been already mentioned. Of all the members of the family at Bramble-brae, she had by far the best heart; and, if we except selfish worldly wisdom, the greatest share of common sense. Had she been placed in proper society, and enjoyed the advantages of education, she would have been an amiable girl: unfortunately for her, she had seen very little but gross vulgarity, and her education had been most miserably neglected. Hence her young, uncultivated mind, prompted by a heart naturally benevolent,

led her into many eccentricities of conduct. Her passions were strong, and her perceptions vivid; what she keenly felt was as warmly expressed, and often in language not quite suited to her sex and station; but of all this, from her ignorance of propriety, she was totally unconscious.

The hey-day of youth was indeed waning apace, and she was every day becoming more cool and cautious; and, although late in life, gave promise of still being, if not an ornament to society, at least a very respectable member of it. When any of the domestics expected a scolding, Miss Burton was ever their intercessor: she often contrived to secrete cold meat from the pantry, and cast clothes wherever she could find them, and distributed them privately to the hungry and naked. Without any pretensions to the fastidious delicacy of a fine lady, she would often blush for the selfishness of Sir Peter, and at the ostentatious pomposity of her mother, delivered in a dialect, compared with which Miss Burton's address, though neither very correct nor refined, was elegance itself.

I have often observed her endeavouring to turn the attention of the company to some new subject, when her parents were speaking contemptuously of learning and its professors. By these and similar traits, she tried to smooth some of the asperities which rendered my situation so disagreeable; but her gentle and delicate attentions were soon observed by her mother, who, as I discovered, acted as a spy upon her daughter and me.

One morning, after breakfast, while seated alone in the parlour, and waiting for my pupils, I was beguiling the time with a copy of Thomson's Seasons, which had been read by Maria B., whose fair hand had made several pencil marks on the margin, when Miss Burton came in, and asked me to make a pen for her. I shut the book, and, laying it down, began to cut the quill, when, all of a sudden, in burst Lady Lightfoot in a fury. Miss Burton had just taken up the book, which unfortunately opened at that beautiful apostrophe of the author's :

"O happy they, the happiest of their kind,
Whom love and gentle sympathy make one!"

And still more *mal-apropos*, there was a pencil mark at the commencement of the passage. Lady Lightfoot was just enough of a scholar to read the word "LOVE," and to observe, from the irregular length of the lines, that it was verse; but these were discoveries sufficient. Having twitched the luckless volume from her daughter's hand, she no sooner discovered what has been already related, than, in a paroxysm of rage, she threw it into the fire. For the reasons before mentioned, the book was to me of inestimable value; and this outrage upon feelings so sacred and dear to my bosom, put me nearly into a rage with her ladyship. My first impulse, however, was to snatch the hapless bard from immediate destruction; and by the time I had succeeded in this, surprise, with the aid of returning reason, kept me silent.

It was some time before her ladyship could recover breath from the paroxysm of

passion; and her first attempt at speech was merely a series of inarticulate sounds. She pulled the bell for Sir Peter; who in a short time made his appearance with a face of wonder; while Miss Burton and I stood mute with astonishment: for although I have related the cause of her ladyship's rage, it was only now disclosed in the following philippic, broken into a number of parts, from a scarcity of breath and a superfluity of rage:

"Well, Sir Peter Lightfoot, what think you now? I told you as how, that no good could never come of your taking in any of them shabby varmin into your house: but you reclined taking my adwice, and you see the upshot!"

"What do I see? what means all this hullabaloo?" cried the astonished knight.

"What does it mean!" replied the enraged virago; "Vy, look at that there vorthless, ungrateful feller, and that there silly, low-lifed, pert, fond hussey, whom I am so misfortunate as to call my daughter!—Him for to come, for to go, to disabuse the confidents deposed in him by

his inferiors, who have fed his body, and vould have clothed his back too, if he had deserved it. Indeed, Sir Peter, I vas going to propose to you, to give Mr Slyboots there your black welvet breeches, that only vants seating, and your French gray coat, vich is only a little broke at the elbows,—but some people don't know their friends!"

"Lady Lightfoot, Lady Lightfoot! come to the point,—what have they done?" "Done," returned she, "G—d knows what they vould have done, if my prudence had not prewented them! Look at that there nasty book,—full of love, poetry, palaver, and nonsense;—all in open defence to my most striking conjunctions! And to have the impudence to dare to purtend for to love my daughter! light-headed hussey as she is! Most purvoking insurance, indeed! —But I sees it all,—a beggar and a swineler, who vants to seduce her infections for the sake of her fortune.—And you, Sir Peter! to stand like a statute, and never says no-

thing to support the dignity of your house, and the character of your family!"

"Lady Lightfoot," replied the husband of this termagant, "you degrade yourself and all the family by passion; great people have no passions:—be pleased to withdraw, and matters shall be settled to your satisfaction." "They cannot be settled to my satisfeckshun, unless that shaberoon is turned from Bramble-brae immediately,—either him or me leaves it,—that's poz!"

My indignation, which it was at first difficult for me to suppress, had now cooled down to contempt, and I very laconically replied, that Lady Lightfoot's opinion of my conduct, and the epithets with which she had honoured me, were below my notice; and that I was ready and anxious to leave the house immediately.

Miss Burton now requested to be heard, and with more temper and prudence than I expected, stated circumstances as they really were; concluding with this, that she was well convinced I had no intention of courting her; so they need not be afraid, as no man of

common sense, would be in a hurry to match himself with one, whose mother could thus expose both herself and child.

The altercation was about to be renewed, when the knight, seeing no other way of concluding the scene, pushed the ladies out of the room; and after remarking he was sorry for what had happened, he admitted that, for his own part, he saw nothing to have occasioned such a *blow up*, but believed it would be most agreeable for all parties, that I should resign. I answered that I had fully determined upon an immediate removal.—My salary was instantly paid, and I bade a lasting adieu to Bramble-brae.

Thus was I once again without any employment; but, seated at my father's fire side, I felt satisfaction, rather than regret, at being released from a situation which had always been disagreeable, and had ultimately become intolerable.

About a week after my removal I received a letter by post, which, upon opening, I found was merely the envelope of two bank notes, for five pounds each; it con-

tained no writing, except the address, which was evidently in a disguised hand, and I could form no plausible conjecture concerning my anonymous benefactor.

Having now some leisure for reflection, I felt that neither my principles nor prudence were to blame in retreating so precipitately from my late situations; yet it appeared exceedingly probable, that a construction might be put upon my conduct by the public, which would not tell to my advantage. This gave me very serious concern, and it was only the consciousness of having done my duty that supported my spirits.

I had continued at home more than a year, with no other employment than preaching occasionally for such clergymen as were sick or absent. My services on these occasions, however, were gratuitous; and I found myself in such a state of dependence, that I bitterly repented my wish to study Latin, instead of learning some manual occupation, by which I could have maintained myself respectably, in the class of

society in which I should have been placed: whereas now, while in appearance I ranked above them, in point of income I was far inferior, and obliged to consider myself as little better than a useless dependent upon society.

CHAPTER VII.

It is observable, that God is never so much blasphemed as when men are most religious. It is then that they so liberally invest him with their peculiar follies, passions, and prejudices. If their way lie through scenes of blood, he must go before them. The Creator of the universe must be of a party, sect, or faction; he must be particularly their God, or he is no God.

Letters of St Evremond.

WHILE in this desponding state, proposals were made to me to become assistant to a clergyman at some distance, whose infirm state of health prevented him from preaching, although he was still able to go through the ordinary routine of parish business. Having expressed my willingness to embrace this offer, an agreement took place between me and the incumbent, for one

year, to be continued afterwards, if both parties found it eligible. I entered upon my office, deeply impressed with the importance of those duties which I had to discharge; and with a determined resolution to promote the best interests of my parishioners, both by instruction and example. The responsibility was awful; but I esteemed it as an additional incitement. I had ever felt warmly interested in the happiness of mankind, and now considered myself as favoured by Providence, in being called to a station, in which I believed duty would be a pleasure. To fill up the idea I had formed of a parish minister, I conceived that much more than pulpit instruction was necessary; such as becoming personally acquainted with my flock, discovering their general habits, little foibles, jarring interests, and party differences, and by using every laudable means to gain, not only their esteem but also their confidence, as a friend, to whom they might at all times apply for advice. Thus, by gentle and indirect me-

thods, I hoped to lead them to the right path, and considered myself as

> "The guide to good, the counsellor of peace,
> The friend, the father of the village train;"

While I fondly cherished the hope, that I might be able to acquire the esteem of the rich, the affection of the poor, and the gratitude of the thoughtless, whom my counsels would reclaim.

In what might be termed my official duties, I conceived it indispensably necessary, to insist upon the faith of my parishioners being illustrated by a corresponding practice. Every one is aware that, even among teachers in the same church, differences of opinion will exist. A fondness for mysteries,—attachment to peculiar doctrines,—with a tendency to intolerance, form a prominent feature in the discourses of some clergymen; and these are apt to produce a degree of zeal in the hearers, which is sometimes exercised beyond discretion. It was with no small degree of concern, that I discovered this to be the state of my congre-

gation; but to do them justice, few were indifferent about what they considered the direct duties of religion: they were regular in their attendance on public ordinances, and devoutly attentive during their performance. They were fond of disputing on controversial topics; and while they advanced evangelical doctrines, they often defended them with a degree of virulence and spirit, incompatible with that gospel, whose tendency is "peace on earth, and good will to men." Hence religion had a greater influence on their heads than their hearts; and they might not unaptly be compared to the image that Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream, having a head of fine gold, but feet of miry clay. Aware of the prejudices which I had to encounter, and which I felt to be a duty, if possible, to eradicate, I endeavoured to follow the counsel of St Paul, and become "all things to all men, that I might gain some;" and had just begun to congratulate myself on the apparent success of my labours, when an ebullition burst forth, which was produc-

tive of much alarm to the public in general, and totally destroyed all the beautiful theory which I had for a considerable time indulged.

The reader, who is acquainted with the history of Britain for the last forty years, will recollect Lord George Gordon's opposition to the bill previously passed in parliament for the relief of the Roman Catholics, and the dreadful riots to which that opposition gave rise in the metropolis, in June 1780.

The dread of Catholic influence spread over the kingdom, and the alarm (particularly among the common people,) became general. Fox's Book of Martyrs, Abstracts of the Massacres of the Protestants in France and Ireland, with W—n's Sermons of "Popery another Gospel," were in every body's hands; a number of Dissenting parties had not yet forgotten Bothwell Bridge, Pentland Hills, &c.: all these were dwelt upon in glowing colours, both from the pulpit and the press; till the minds of the vulgar were filled with the most dreadful

anticipations. The newspapers of the day teemed with resolutions and petitions to Parliament, from a multitude of parishes in Scotland, under the title of "Protestant Interest."

On this occasion, the intolerant zeal of my hearers overstepped all discretion, and led them into such measures as not only interfered with the tranquillity of their more liberal neighbours, but would have rendered them amenable to the civil law. This was indeed matter of deep regret to me and a few others in the parish; but my sorrow was increased when I found that the disturbance which had happened, instead of being produced by the over-heated zeal of a few, had the sanction of the majority in the parish, who still gloried in what they had done; and that a few gray-headed men, of whom the minister was whispered to be one, had spoken with approbation of conduct, which to me appeared indefensible.

I took an early opportunity of addressing my audience in a discourse, in which I endeavoured to establish the principles of uni-

versal benevolence, and freedom of religious opinion, contained in the Gospel: and insisted upon that charity which "thinketh no evil," as being an essential qualification in every one who laid claim to the title of a Christian; contrasting the character of the meek and lowly Jesus, who told his disciples that they knew not what manner of spirit they were of, with that of the bigot and fanatic, whether Papist or Protestant, who oppressed and persecuted all who were not of the same religious profession with themselves. The purport of my discourse, and some of the allusions, were so obvious as to be fully understood; and, indeed, it was my wish to send the truth home to their bosoms.

My sentiments were certainly liberal; but they were at the same time strictly scriptural and orthodox; and they were delivered, I believe, with energy, commensurate with the generous indignation I felt against the outrages that had been committed.

In the course of the week I was invited to spend the evening with a respectable family, which I had occasionally visited, and I there learned that my sermon had given great and general offence.

Next Sunday, I was astonished to find, that not a fourth part of the usual audience attended. On the Thursday following, five of the six elders belonging to the parish waited upon the minister, and told him, that if he was to continue me as an assistant, they would resign their office immediately; and further, that they were certain, unless I was dismissed, more than three-fourths of the congregation would leave the church, and that a dissenting meeting-house would be erected without delay. The clergyman sent for me,—expressed his sorrow at what had happened, although he could not help thinking that I had been very imprudent; and, as matters had come to such a pitch, he saw no way of compromising the affair. He did not, by any means, question my sincerity, but did not quite agree with all I had said,

and although he had a good opinion of me, yet he was an old man,—had lived long with his parishioners, who were perhaps a little over-rigid in the present instance; but he was perfectly aware that all opposition to their prejudices would be fruitless. The result therefore was, that, for the peace of the old man, and also of the church, I resigned my charge, and bade farewell to the parish of ——.

This was not, however, the only consequence of my imprudence. I soon after received a summons to attend a meeting of presbytery, before which a charge had been lodged against me by my late flock, on account of the doctrines advanced by me in my offensive sermon. The five elders, and a number more, had delivered a paper, the purport of which was, that they conceived themselves called upon to lift up their testimony in Zion, in the day of her calamity, when the rulers of the land had set their faces against her, and those who had been appointed to serve at her altars, kindled strange fire, and offered unclean things; concluding with a

prayer, that the Reverend Presbytery would purge the House of the Lord from backsliders and all enemies to the peace of Jerusalem; particularly naming me, and denouncing my hapless sermon as pregnant with heresy of the most dangerous kind. To be brief, I was called in, and the original copy of the discourse in question being produced and read, I was, by a majority of votes, assoilzied; a motion for a vote of censure being indignantly rejected.

Thus was I again cast helpless on the world. To add to my unhappiness, my sister's husband, Smith, either from misfortune or misconduct, perhaps both, had for a considerable time been embarrassed in his affairs: my father had assisted him even farther than prudence warranted; and had also been induced to become his security for a loan, by which it was expected that matters would be retrieved. It may also be noticed, that some time ago, an ill-natured creditor having taken out a caption against Smith, was about to lay him in jail, and my sister applied to me.

The debt was thirty pounds; and in commiseration of her and her family (for my confidence in her husband was lost), I gave my bill for the sum, with interest, payable twelve months after date; calculating that, at the worst, I could, with rigid economy, save that sum against the time it became due.

I was again idle in my father's house, and seldom honoured even with an invitation to preach. The spirit of the times, the temper of the common people in that quarter of the country, added to the clamour raised against my unfortunate sermon, all operated against me; and, to say the truth, I became very unpopular. A few behaved to me with respect, proportioned to the harsh treatment which I had received from others; but still I was pining in poverty and neglect; and on some occasions I with difficulty escaped the insults of the vulgar.

My bill above mentioned became due, while my brother-in-law's affairs were daily getting worse, and his ruin fast approaching. He in fact could do nothing, and as the cre-

ditor was inexorable, I was in the end thrown into jail. Yet my sufferings, on this occasion, were fortunately limited to the shame of being imprisoned; for although I was apprehended so suddenly, and the shock upon my feelings was so great, that I was incapable of making application to any friend for assistance, I had been confined only about four hours, when the gaoler entered, and told me I was at liberty. "What," said I, "has the creditor at last relented?" "No, but the debt and expenses are discharged." "By whom?" "I don't know,—I can't tell,—Ah sir! you will yet be a happy man,—but I must say nothing!" From his manner I easily divined that he knew my benefactor, whom I was most anxious to discover, if possible; but all that I could learn was, that a stranger had done it, who was determined not to be known.

Upon coming down stairs from "durrance vile," I was met by three or four of my old parishioners at ———. It was a market day; they had just heard of my being apprehended; and, although they con-

gratulated me upon my freedom, were, I believe, disappointed that they had been anticipated in coming forward as my deliverers. We dined together at the principal inn, from which they escorted me home, where we were met by my father, who shed tears of joy over his unfortunate son. My mother had sunk in a swoon when I was seized by the officers, and was now in a strong fever, attended with delirium.

A few days after this, a circumstance occurred, which, although of a trifling nature, is highly deserving of a place in these memoirs.

A gentleman in the parish of ——, from whence I had made an abrupt departure, sent his servant with a card, requesting the favour of my *vile heterodox sermon* for perusal. Conscious that both I and my sermon had been much represented, I felt pleased in the opportunity of doing myself justice, by submitting the performance to the perusal of any person of good sense, who seemed to think it worth the trouble. The sermon was therefore sent,

with a note expressing my satisfaction at being so far remembered by one whom I esteemed. In about two weeks after, I received a letter from a respectable bookseller in Edinburgh, stating, that he had by accident seen my discourse, and offering me twenty guineas for the copy-right, to be paid immediately upon my agreeing to his terms.

This was a very agreeable surprise to me; but I had still some apprehension, that although the presbytery had not denounced my discourse, they might not approve of its publication at the present time; and, as I had not quite relinquished every hope of obtaining a church, I did not chuse to incur their displeasure: I knew that I had among them one fast friend, of sentiments congenial with my own, and to him I communicated the proposal that had been made. He very readily undertook to manage the matter, and after next meeting of presbytery informed me, by letter, that the members were highly pleased with the deference I had shown to their opinion; that I should by all means accept the terms. and

rest assured that the publication would do me no injury, except in the opinion of those from whom nothing was to be feared. My sermon was published, the money paid, and a score of copies transmitted to me for the use of my friends.

The money came very seasonably to relieve my pecuniary distresses. I learned some months after, that these twenty guineas of apparent purchase-money, were privately raised by contribution, among a few friends in the parish of ———, including one or two clergymen in the presbytery; and that the bookseller was only their tool, that they might be enabled to do me a kindness without hurting my feelings.

Most of these kind benefactors are now removed beyond the reach of my feeble thanks; but should any of them ever peruse this humble narrative, I beg to assure them, that my sense of their kindness will perish, only when I can no longer recollect the occurrences of my life.

For another year I continued to vegetate nearly as uselessly, although not

so luxuriantly, as the docks that grew in the ditches of my father's farm. If the sickness is painful that arises from hope deferred, that which proceeds from despondency is certainly more so. My former gloomy anticipations and reflections now returned with a force, proportionate to my lengthened and reiterated disappointments. The bright, but delusive beams of hope, which once illuminated my path, and lighted me cheerily along, were now almost totally obscured; and I every day saw the gloomy shade thickening around me. My father's roof, to be sure, could still afford me shelter, and I sat daily at his table; but alas! he and my mother were now bent with age, and the fruits of that industry which had occupied their better days, had been imprudently squandered in abortive endeavours to promote the prosperity of their two children; both of whom, instead of being able to repay them, had cheerless indigence staring them in the face.

Only those who have been placed in similar situations, can understand what I then

felt, or in how different a light I viewed the same objects that I had so much admired a few years before. When I left school for college, I looked with contempt on the lubberly ignorant boys, who could hardly read, and were utterly incapable of writing their own names. And even after having commenced my college studies, when my mind had begun to expand; when I could relish the beauties of literature; when my eyes sparkled as I perused the heroic feats of ancient heroes; or my bosom glowed with finer and softer sentiments; when I explored the countless beauties of nature; or when fancy winged her boundless flight through the illimitable fields of space; even then, I must confess, that I pitied the poor rustic, who, amidst his toil,

"Whistled for want of thought."

Indeed, I am not sure, but something like contempt mingled itself with the sigh that I heaved for him, while I mentally exclaimed, "poor wretch! how ignorant, and yet how happy!"

Alas! how different were my sensations now! Although I could not, without regret, have resigned the little knowledge I possessed, even had it been possible; yet gladly would I have exchanged situations with the lad who drove my father's cart, or the humble artisan mending his plough. Yes, I looked upon him, enjoying his happiness; and, turning from him, exclaimed,

"If ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise!"

In some degree to sooth my mind and assist my father, I now began, occasionally, to take an active part in the labours of the farm. My performance was awkward enough, and in consequence more tiresome to myself; I began to observe the sidelong leer, and suppressed smile of my fellow labourers, at my strained and painful efforts to perform what they did so easily. It was then that I was ready to exclaim, with the steward in the gospel: "I cannot dig, and to beg I am ashamed!" Amidst this weariness of mind and fatigue of body, I was not altogether displeased with the suggestion of

a friend, that so constant an application to labour was incompatible with the station I still ought to hold in society, and with those future prospects, the attainment of which it would be imprudence and folly to renounce.

CHAPTER VIII.

The bold impostor
Looks not more silly when the cheat's found out.
BLAIR.

HAVING now by far too much leisure, I formed the resolution of seeing the Scottish metropolis, which I had never visited: the roads being good, and habit having made me an excellent pedestrian, the journey could be performed at a very trifling expense. I set out early on a summer morning, and after a pleasant journey, during which nothing occurred worthy of relating, I arrived in *Auld Reekie;* where, being resolved to spend a few days, I intended to look for decent lodgings, at a rate suited to my finances; but in the meantime found it necessary to dine at an inn. Upon sitting down to dinner, I was asked by the waiter, whether I had any objections to a gentle-

man dining along with me. On my replying, that I should be happy to see him, a gentleman, apparently about thirty years of age, was .introduced. His appearance was engaging, his conversation lively and intelligent, and I regretted that I could not longer enjoy his company. When about to discharge our bill, my small money being expended, I asked the waiter to change me a five pound note. As the waiter replied that he should have to send out for it, my companion said that he believed he could accommodate me; which he did in four small notes and a pound of silver. We parted mutually pleased with each other, and I began my saunter, intending to look for lodgings.

As I happened to pass the theatre, a bill of the Tragedy of Douglas, to be performed that evening, was put into my hand. It was one of my favourite plays; and, as I had never enjoyed the luxury of seeing a respectable company of actors, the temptation was irresistible. When the doors were opened, I pushed in with the crowd, and

with some difficulty got forward to the door-keeper's box, to pay for my ticket. I had scarcely received it, however, when, to my utter amazement, I was charged with having given two bad shillings. I was immediately collared, questioned, and most liberally complimented with the epithets of swindler and rascal. In a few moments I became an object of general curiosity. "Take him before a magistrate," cried some: "to gaol, to gaol;" was more loudly vociferated from the crowd.

A gentleman, who appeared to take some interest in my fate, stepped forward, and asked if I had any more silver in my pocket; upon which I pulled out a parcel of shillings, and put them into his hand. —He shook his head, saying "Ah sir! they are all alike,—whoever you are, you must go before a magistrate." I begged that I might be conducted thither immediately; for I felt ready to drop down with confusion; and I heard the agitation which appeared in my countenance pronounced, by the misjudging crowd, an indisputable evidence of my guilt. The gentleman

procedure in a charge of this kind were legal, I would immediately discharge your friend, upon receiving his address and promise to attend, if again called upon."

With no small degree of confusion, I thanked Miss Burton for her goodness, and the magistrate for his politeness; but told him, that respecting the subject which had brought me before him, I felt like Cæsar's wife, that it was not enough to be conscious of innocence,—I must have my character cleared beyond suspicion; and therefore suggested, that the waiter of the inn in which I dined should be immediately sent for, and examined in regard to what he knew of the stranger who sat with me at dinner, or what he saw pass between us. This was approved of by all present; and a messenger was despatched for the waiter, who, upon his arrival, corroborated my story in every circumstance; stating, that the stranger sought my company, and that he heard him offer the change to me. The magistrate and company appeared now to be convinced of my innocence; but expressed their regret, that

the real culprit could not be found, and that I, besides losing my money, should be placed in such danger by a rascal.

One of the gentlemen asked me, whether I could tell to what bank my note belonged, or if I remembered the number. I knew the bank, but was ignorant of the number. I recollected, however, that I had performed a small equation in algebra on the back of the note, and as the operation was fresh in my mind, I said I could just now note it down in a similar manner. At the general request of the company this was done; as they said it might be the means of detecting a man so dangerous to the public.

Just as we were about to depart, a crowd approached the magistrate's door, and a message was sent in, that a man had been detected in attempting to pass a counterfeit note, and that he was below in custody of the officers. The waiter of the inn, who had met the crowd on his return, on seeing the fellow in custody, immediately recognised him as my dinner companion. He

above mentioned, asked me if I came into the theatre with any companion, or if there was any one in the surrounding crowd that knew me.

At this moment, what were my sensations, when a party of ladies pressed forward, among whom I beheld Miss Burton! Although her presence was agony, yet, I felt somewhat relieved, when she pushed through the crowd, crying, "I know him, I know him! and will pledge my life upon his innocence." She shook me by the hand, inquired the reason of my visit to Edinburgh, and insisted upon my retiring immediately, and going before a magistrate; whither, she said, she was determined to accompany me.

A passage was opened in the crowd, and Miss Burton, with other three gentlemen, one of whom was the person who had already interrogated me, accompanied me to the house of the first Bailie.—Our reception was polite, and the necessary investigation conducted with all possible delicacy; although I felt sadly humbled under the

suspicion of so degrading a charge. I stated, plainly and simply, the manner in which the money had come into my possession. And being asked by the magistrate, whether I should be able to recognize the person from whom I received it? where I had dined? and whether I had disposed of any of the notes? I took them from my pocket-book, and put them into his hands. They were passed round among the gentlemen, and all four pronounced forgeries.

Although I could hardly lift my eyes, I observed Miss Burton's emotion; who, without waiting to hear any opinion from the magistrate, earnestly said, "If bail be admissible in this unlucky case, I will be bail for this gentleman, or procure it for him to any amount, as I am conscious he is, he must be innocent!" "Madam," replied the magistrate, "I am heartily glad to hear you say so, not doubting that you speak from your knowledge of the gentleman: appearances, however, are certainly against him. Your name and station, madam, are not unknown to me; and were I certain that such a

idea of being the means of convicting a man of a crime, which would in all probability cost him his life.

It was now late, and not having procured a lodging, I returned to the inn. Next morning a letter was handed to me by the waiter, who said it was left by a *cadie,* and required no answer. Upon opening it, I found enclosed two bank notes, one for five, and the other for ten pound, with the following epistle:

"SIR,—You will perceive by this, that I claim the privilege of an old *acquaintance,* permit me to say *friend.* By a glance at your pocket-book last night, I saw that it was not overstocked with the needful; and as your five-pound note will, at least for the present, be detained as evidence, it became necessary that some friend should replace it.

"It has also occurred to me, that the affair of last night may detain you longer from home than you expected at setting out; I have therefore taken the further liberty of being your banker for ten pounds, to meet

exigencies. I conceive my family as much more indebted to you, and am only performing a small part of a duty which they ought to have long since discharged.—Should you be foolish enough to refuse, or return the enclosed, you will seriously offend me, and compel me to think that you have more pride and less common sense than I have been accustomed to ascribe to you. Persuaded, however, that you will not give me this cause for thinking of you in a manner so much to your disadvantage, I annex my present address. I shall yet be at least two weeks in town, and will, at all times, be glad to see you. Should you be in any difficulty, it is possible I may have interest to procure you friendly or legal advice. Do not allow false modesty, or still more foolish etiquette, to prevent you from applying for what will at all times be at your service—the friendship of ELIZA BURTON."

On a second perusal of this letter, my resolution was formed to return the money immediately; however, after ten minutes

returned with the mob that surrounded the culprit, and forcing his way in close to him, at the moment that the magistrate appeared, cried out: "There, please your honour, that's the fellow that dined with the gentleman,—that's he who changed the note to him!"

The magistrate now requested me to look at the unfortunate man, and say whether the waiter's evidence was correct. When his eye met mine, he seemed self-convicted; and, indeed, my sensations were such, that I could not look at him longer than to ascertain his identity, which I did at the first glance. But, exclusive of conscious guilt, I thought that I observed other very strong and apparently painful emotions depicted in his countenance.

The magistrate, seeing appearances so strong against him, ordered him to be searched. Will it be believed? I almost wished that my note might not be in his possession, and I had forgotten that my own complete exculpation depended on his conviction. In one pocket were found some

forged notes; and, in another, a book containing a few real one pound notes, and my unfortunate note, with the marks on the back as I had previously described. On being questioned, who, and what he was, or if he had any thing to state in his own defence, his only reply was: "that he was an unfortunate man, and declined saying any thing further at present." My declaration and that of the waiter being read over to him, and signed by us, he was fully committed for trial.

Miss Burton, the worthy magistrate, and the company, shook me heartily by the hand, complimenting me upon my complete justification. My feelings were certainly very different from those with which I entered the house; yet I was very unhappy, and my sensations too mingled to be easily analysed or described.—One prominent feeling was, gratitude to Providence for my own speedy deliverance and complete exoneration; but there was a sensation of pity for him who was now committed, blended with something approaching to horror, at the

serious reflection, I determined otherwise. It seemed a delicacy rather too fastidious, to throw away fifteen pounds, and forfeit the good opinion of one who appeared a sincere friend. A slight struggle took place with what I at first believed independence of mind; but, suspecting that it was only pride, I pocketed the affront.

Nothing particular occurred during the remainder of the day, except my procuring lodgings; my mind was still unsettled, and amidst the novelty around me, I could not forget what I still felt as an unpleasant adventure. And next day, after breakfast, when just about to call on an acquaintance, a letter was put into my hands, which I instantly broke open, and read as follows:

CHAPTER IX.

The needy man who has known better days;
One whom distress has spited at the world;
Is he whom tempting fiends would pitch upon
To do such deeds as make the prosperous men
Lift up their hands and wonder who could do them!

HOME.

Edinburgh Gaol, July 17.

"SIR,—As this letter will not bear the name of the unfortunate writer, suffice it to say, that the hapless being who swindled you in ———'s tavern, now takes the liberty of addressing you. I am perfectly aware that you have just cause to be deeply offended with me.—I have not only injured you in your property, but have also brought your liberty and character for life into the most imminent danger. Of all this I am perfectly conscious; yet still there is something that impels me to adopt this method of unburthening my heart, under

the persuasion, that you will not reject this communication without a patient perusal. Do not think that I mean to flatter you, when I say, that your feelings were exhibited in your countenance, when your declaration, and the other corroborating circumstances, compelled the magistrate to commit me for trial. It was then that I read your heart; my opinion of which has determined me to communicate to you the outlines of a life, which might have been made useful to myself and others;—its present value you can too easily appreciate.

"My parents, who were respectable in their sphere of life, are still alive, although now reduced to poverty, and that chiefly on my account. My father, who farmed about one hundred acres of land,—had two sons, of whom I am the elder, and three daughters. He had a considerable portion of plain common sense; though he had himself enjoyed few of the advantages of education, he knew its value, and determined to have his sons educated as well as his means could afford. After my brother and I had learned

the elementary branches at the parish school, my father, in an evil hour, resolved upon sending us to an academy in the neighbouring town, which was become a fashionable seminary. The principal studies which he wished us to follow, were, the different branches of mathematics; observing, that as he had a long lease, which, after his death, could be enjoyed by only one of us, the other might be qualified to turn himself to something respectable. When we entered the academy, I believe both of us intended to give close application to our studies, and to live with sobriety and regularity of conduct.

"Among the pupils at this seminary, were a number of young fellows who had plenty of money, which they spent freely; and we learned too soon to imitate their extravagance. Before two years (the term of our intended stay) had expired, we were initiated into all the follies and vices of the town; we gallanted the ladies, drank deep, quizzed the waiters, and ran scores with tradesmen. This, however, was to

have an end. We returned home, and our father, with an aching heart, paid off our debts, which amounted to more than double the sum which he had calculated as the expense of an academical education. Being yet a hale stout man, he saw the impropriety of relinquishing the farm to either of us; and therefore proposed, that one of us should now choose a profession, and that the other, if agreeable, might assist him in his agricultural operations, not as a servant, but to receive a certain proportion of the profits. As I was the elder, he naturally expected that I would be inclined to devote my attention to the improvement of a farm, the lease of which I had the prospect of enjoying during life; our late pursuits and associations, however, had given both my brother and me a distaste for manual labour, and inspired us with the most sovereign contempt for the boorish rusticity (as we termed it) of our former companions.

"My brother, therefore, told my father, that if he would advance him as much

money as would purchase an ensigncy, he had contracted friendships upon which he could rely for promotion, and that he expected, should war be prolonged, to die a field officer. After much opposition, and useless advice from my father, my brother continued obstinate—for "*he would be a soldier;*" and an ensigncy in the line was accordingly purchased.

"While my father now calculated on my remaining with him, I must acknowledge, to my shame, that I shrank from the daily labour which he expected me to perform, among a class of beings with whom I was become too proud to associate; and all this for the contingency of succeeding to a paltry farm, at a period apparently so remote, that the best of life was to be wasted in fruitless expectation.

"After some artful prefacing, and no small degree of circumlocution, I told my father, that were he to give me, what I might think a reasonable share of his annual profits, it would doubtless prevent him from making an adequate provision for my sis-

ters; therefore, as I had no great inclination for agricultural pursuits, and had acquired some acquaintance with mercantile affairs, if he would furnish me with a sum equal to that laid out for my brother, I had no doubt of succeeding well.

"My father was equally surprised and disappointed. He urged, intreated, and used every persuasion he could think of; and, in short, wasted much good sense to very little purpose. Being a fond parent, and seeing me obstinate, he ultimately, although reluctantly, complied with my wishes. I embarked in a concern, which I soon found I did not understand, although I was for sometime pretty successful, and with prudent perseverance, might have done well. My early habits I had checked a little, but they were not eradicated. My circle of acquaintance extended; I became insensibly less attentive to business, while my habits were progressively growing more expensive. The event will easily be anticipated: money daily became scarcer; and I succeeded in procuring several sums from my father, until

he saw the imprudence both of my conduct and his own. A bankruptcy soon followed; the creditors took possession of my property; divided it among them; and, as I had made a fair surrender, discharged me, and left me without a shilling.

"By the interest of my father's landlord, the situation of factor on a gentleman's estate was procured for me. Experience had now given me a good lesson, which I resolved not to forget. Being but ill qualified for the duties of my new station, I exerted myself in every possible way, to obtain that knowledge which was necessary to a proper discharge of my trust.

"Every day made me better acquainted with different soils, the value of land, cattle, grain, and, in short, of all the details of rural economy. My master had seen my former ignorance, but he had also witnessed my assiduity in the pursuit of information. My fidelity and close application gave much satisfaction; and I expected to acquire both wealth and respect in my office; when, alas! my worthy master died

suddenly, leaving the heiress, a minor, under the management of curators, by whom I was dismissed from a situation, which was soon after filled by one of themselves. Again out of employment, I offered my services to the public as a land-surveyor, got some little jobs, but scarcely enough to keep me alive, much less to preserve the respectability of appearance necessary to ensure success in my new vocation. After I had struggled on in this way for some time, a lease of a farm was offered; and as I was now (in my own opinion) an adept in agricultural concerns, and conceived that the lease might be obtained upon advantageous terms, after many consultations with my father, I obtained his promise to advance me the necessary capital, for I had none of my own. The farm was taken,—but it was in a state of nature, and required to be improved, at considerable expense, before any thing like an adequate return could be expected. My father could not command sufficient funds, but he borrowed money, giving his own lease as a security.

" Ditching, draining, levelling, and manuring, were now my unremitted study and exercise. In spite of all my exertions, however, a series of misfortunes reduced me again, and I seemed now to be in the situation of him, concerning whom it was denounced by the prophet of old, ' Whatsoever this man doeth, it shall not prosper."

" By a stupid blunder on my part, I had entered on a lease which was unassignable; in consequence of which, it now reverted into the hands of my landlord, or rather into those of an avaricious and unfeeling factor; for the proprietor resided in another kingdom. My father's lease and farm-stocking were sold, to discharge the debts incurred in our joint attempts to improve this unfortunate farm, and from the wreck of his affairs, he with difficulty saved as much as stocked a few acres of land; but he still owed one hundred pounds, to a person who did not need the money, and who generously agreed to wait till we saw better times.

" My father's constitution had received a

severe shock in this struggle with misfortune, and he became unable to manage his little farm. I felt it both my duty and inclination to assist him, and was now grown quite an industrious agriculturist; when, as if misfortune had not yet exhausted her quiver, the friend, to whom we owed the hundred pounds, died. His heir was a man who resided in a distant part of the country, a total stranger to us; the bill was found among the papers of the deceased, and payment required immediately. This was impossible. However, when we least expected it, Mr F., a young squire in the neighbourhood, of whom I had some acquaintance, hearing the circumstance, came forward and frankly advanced the money; saying, that he felt a pleasure in saving a worthy man, like my father, from ruin. He took my father's note for the sum, merely, as he said, for the sake of form; but requested that he would, upon no account, give himself a moment's uneasiness about the matter. My sisters had been always at home, but in our present situation it appear-

ed more eligible to get them into service, in some respectable families; and Squire F., who condescended to become our friendly counsellor and adviser in this, promised to speak to his mother to engage one of them as her personal attendant. His application was successful: Mary, my youngest sister, went into Lady F.'s service, and was much pleased with her situation; we now became a little more cheerful at home, and were duly grateful for the squire's friendship. Some months had elapsed, when Mary came one evening to visit her mother, decorated with some ornaments which we thought rather unbefitting her station. Upon inquiring how she came by them, the artless girl very ingenuously replied, that they were presents from the squire, for her attention to his mother.

"Our suspicions will easily be anticipated; and they were too well founded, for he tried every method to seduce my sister. I have not patience enough to detail his many villanous schemes; suffice it to say, that when foiled in every other mode of attack, he

threw my father into gaol for non-payment of that unfortunate one hundred pounds; taking care, at the same time, to assure Mary, that the moment she consented to his wishes, her father should be at liberty, and the debt cancelled. The poor girl left her service half distracted, and threw herself, in agony of mind, upon her mother's bosom.

"Boiling with indignation, I challenged the squire:—we fought, and he received what I then believed to be a mortal wound. I am unable to describe my sensations after this rencontre; for though I still felt indignant at the squire's conduct, yet there was also a consciousness of guilt; I believed that he would die, and accused myself of his murder. My father was in jail; my liberty and life were in danger; and my brain was fired almost to madness. My own early follies, the subsequent events of my life, and above all, the result of our acquaintance with Squire F., made me loathe myself and almost all the species. Had not my father been in confinement, my mother helpless,

and my sisters unprotected, I believe I should have committed suicide.

With horrid and desperate resolutions, I fled from my native plains, determined to release my father, or perish in the attempt. Without any plan, but ripe for "deeds of darkness," in an evil hour I met an engraver, an old academical companion, who knew my situation, and gradually dissolved his own secrets. He fabricated forged bank-notes, and had been pretty successful. He made propositions to me, to assist him in the circulation; and I was to participate in the illicit gains. To this I agreed with frantic joy; but my career of crime has been short. I thought that if it were possible to realize a sum sufficient to relieve my father, and replenish his small farm, I would for ever renounce this guilty and hazardous trade. Whether I should have had virtue enough for this, I know not; but Providence, perhaps in mercy, has circumscribed my course. When I had acquired a sufficient sum

for my father's liberation, I transmitted it by a confidential friend, with instructions to say nothing of its coming from me; and even that friend, I am certain, is far from conjecturing how it was procured. This was only a few days before I met with you, and all the rest of my unhallowed gains are taken from me by the hands of justice. I believe you can but ill afford to lose five pounds, for I already know something of you; but I cannot, indeed, promise to repair the injury I have done you, for I am without a shilling in the world.

"One thing I beg leave to mention, in justice to myself, that the shillings I gave you I did not know to be counterfeit; I was myself duped, and received two pounds of them, in exchange for the notes I was passing a few hours before I met you.

"I shall make no comment upon my life, the whole transactions of which are now laid before you;—I have written with candour, having no motive for disguise. You will readily perceive that I have been often a fool; but, till within these few

weeks past, I was never a villain. According to the laws of my country, I have justly forfeited a life, of which I am indeed heartily tired. Yet so inconstant a creature is man, that I feel reluctant to die; and the contemplation of a public and ignominious end, fills me with inexpressible horror. I now wish to live, that I may, if possible, recover my own lost esteem; and I feel that I am still capable of making the effort. But my life is in your hands; your evidence will decide my fate; and I know well, that, in a commercial country like this, I have no mercy to expect.

"There is indeed one way for escape,—by becoming king's evidence, and informing against the engraver; but my heart recoils at the thought, and I will perish on a scaffold, rather than purchase life with the blood of another.

You are not bound over to prosecute; and it will be some weeks before my trial comes on. I persuade myself, and am indeed well convinced, that you are not so hard-hearted as to seek my death, from

private resentment, for the fraud committed on you. But whether you think the duty which you owe to the public obliges you to assist vindictive justice against me, I am less certain, although I rather think you must feel reluctant to the task. By absenting yourself just now, and keeping out of the way till the time of my trial is past, I have some chance to escape. If you have a father, therefore, who is dear to you, and a mother whose heart you would save from anguish, by your affection for them, I conjure you to think of mine.

"Whatever you may resolve upon, I can with confidence rely, that this unreserved communication will never appear against me. I have taken measures for the sure delivery of this to you, and expect at least your forgiveness, to an erring, but, I trust, sincerely penitent, FELLOW MORTAL."

CHAPTER X.

To a wise man all the world's his soil;
It is not Italy, nor France, nor Europe,
That must bound me, if the Fates call me forth.
BEN JONSON.

I HAD often paused during the foregoing narrative,—the cold sweat starting from my brow,—but, after reaching the conclusion, I sat for some time motionless, and insensible to every external object. Upon recovering myself a little, I walked out to relieve both body and mind from the oppression under which they laboured. But not all that appeared around could interest me, or enable me to abstract my thoughts from the melancholy narrative; and I found it necessary to return to my lodgings, that I might not expose myself by my vacant looks and absent manner.

Upon reviewing the life of this wretched criminal (for such he certainly was), I saw

so much similarity to my own history, that I literally trembled at the thought of what I had escaped: nor am I ashamed to say, that I fell on my knees in gratitude to that protecting Being, who had so mercifully preserved me from those dangers to which many in my situation had been exposed. The same error had been committed in the outset of this unfortunate's life, as in my own. A w'sh to soar above our original station, without rational or prudent encouragement, had involved us both in difficulties and poverty. That I was less guilty, was perhaps owing to my having experienced slighter temptations. However, I had here received a lesson of such importance as was never to be forgotten; and this poor unfortunate man had set himself up as a beacon, to warn me from the rocks on which he had been wrecked.

But what was I to do in his cause? Not for worlds would I have his blood upon my head! although the laws of my country pronounced it legal, and although society might claim it as a duty to convict him by

my evidence, yet every feeling of my heart revolted against the thought; and without knowing how I either could or should act, I determined, at every hazard, except that of implicating myself in his guilt, not to appear in evidence against him. I had no friend with whom to advise; and further, I was not at liberty to betray that confidence which he had reposed in me, by communicating the particulars to another. Thus I wasted the day in vain cogitations; and when exhausted nature sought restoration in sleep, my mind was haunted with horrid and fantastic visions.

This unfortunate affair had quite deranged my plan of spending my time in the metropolis; I was incapable of thinking on any other subject; my nerves were agitated; and I felt that I could not appear in company, without betraying the perturbation of my mind. I walked to Leith, merely to pass away time; and while sauntering on the quay, was most cordially saluted by a hearty shake of the hand from an old acquaintance, now a shipmaster. I was in-

vited, or rather led, on board his vessel, and was soon seated in the cabin. Here we talked of "the days of langsyne;" my friend regretted, that being just about to discharge his cargo, he had at present but little leisure, and that little so liable to many interruptions; but stepping on shore with me, he took me home with him, and introduced me to his wife, requesting me to come at night to sup with them. To this proposal he would admit of no denial.

In the evening I met a most hearty reception; and found my friend possessed of that open sincerity so characterestic of his occupation, with no incompetent share of good sense and general knowledge. He had ingratiated himself so far with me, that before parting for the night, I informed him of the outlines of my progress in life; including my adventures with the unhappy criminal, who was now hardly ever absent from my thoughts, so far as I could do so, without disclosing the secrets which he had intrusted to my confidence. The captain cursed him for a rascal, and expressed his

hope that my evidence would *trounce* him: however, when he saw I was much agitated at his saying so, and heard me express my reluctance to contribute to his condemnation, he dropped the subject for the evening, and we resumed our former hilarity.

As we were walking together next morning, he resumed the subject of the former evening's conversation. "I have thought much about you," said he, "since we parted; I see you are very unhappy, although I think you ought not to be so; yet I respect your feelings, for they do credit to your heart; and I am glad to think there is a fair probability of your getting rid of this unpleasant business. You are not yet served with any legal notice to attend at the prosecution, and are not bound to stay here, nor in any particular place, for a time. I shall be ready to sail for London in a few days, and you shall accompany me. It shall not cost you a farthing; the season is fine, and the trip will be of much service to you. I have got a few acquaintances in London, who will be glad to see

you, or any friend of mine, and we shall think more at large of your concerns and prospects when there.—Come, say that you will go? don't be down-hearted—this is only a cross wind to you: and as for the fellow who has got upon a lee-shore, why, you know he went upon a false reckoning; 'twas, as we may say, attempting a tack against wind and tide; and if so be as he scud thro' the breakers of law without foundering, he may say it is a good landfall:—but I see you don't like the subject, so we'll talk no more of it. You must go with me:—write to your father, and say you are taking a spell with his friend, the master of the Hebe:—get ready to be on board early next week; and then—a fair wind for the Thames."

Though this proposal was quite unexpected, yet, as I knew the frank sincerity of Captain L., and, glad of an opportunity to escape from the present scene, I accepted his friendly offer.

Still I was uneasy about the poor prisoner, whom I had a strong desire to visit; but

prudence whispered that it would be highly improper, as well as hazardous: however, since I was so soon to leave Scotland, I resolved upon a step hardly less romantic. The goodness of heart which Miss Burton had already shewn in this unfortunate affair, made me determine to recall her attention to this hapless child of misery. Accordingly I despatched a note, requesting the favour of a short interview, and begging that she would say when I might wait upon her. In her reply to my note she chid my diffidence, and assured me that she would be happy to see me immediately. She received me with an air of gracefulness and ease, which I had never seen equalled, except in the family of my lamented friend Mr B.; and seemed much inclined to prolong an interview, which she was pleased to say she expected much sooner. Our conversation naturally turning on the prisoner, I told her how unhappy I felt at the idea of giving evidence against him, and my consequent resolution of sailing for London with Captain L. After musing a little, she

approved highly of my scheme, which she said would, in all probability, relieve my mind from present anxiety, and perhaps remove entirely the cause of my uneasiness.—"Since you approve of my intention," said I, "may I venture to solicit your kindness in behalf of this unhappy man, who, I fear, may not only want the common necessaries of life, but is labouring, I apprehend, under mental agony, more acute than the dread of personal suffering, or even infamy, could occasion. Miss Burton easily discovered that I knew more of him than I had told her, and, before we parted, she contrived to get the whole of his history. As my apology for this apparent breach of trust, I may state, that I was induced to make the disclosure by the conviction, that, instead of exposing him to any additional hazard, it might tend materially to his advantage.

Miss Burton, very much affected by the relation, urged me to prosecute my voyage; advising me, at the same time, neither to see the criminal, nor any one connected with him.

On the day of sailing, Captain L. being detained on shore with a friend or two, till the vessel was in the Frith, we went out in the boat, and set sail with a fair wind. This was a new scene to me, and I enjoyed it much, keeping upon deck the whole day, except at meals. Captain L. informed us at dinner, that he had three ladies, passengers, on board; but, as they were a little sea-sick, they did not yet choose to appear. On the forenoon of the second day, the captain said he was going down to assist the ladies, and requested me to attend and hand them on deck. What was my surprise, when I found that our sea-nymphs were Miss Burton, and the two ladies who accompanied her to the magistrate's house! Miss Burton expressed great satisfaction that this short voyage was to procure her the pleasure of my company, whom she introduced to her friends as an old and much esteemed acquaintance.

Among the steerage passengers was a poor widow and two children, the youngest about two years of age. Her hus-

band had died in Edinburgh, and being an Englishwoman, she was returning to her friends. Her aspect was meagre and squalid; her youngest child appeared to be dying; and both mother and children were in a most wretched state for clothing. Here were proper objects for Miss Burton's benevolence. Their passage had been paid from some charitable fund; and, although Captain L. was a humane man, yet their comforts would have been fewer, had it not been for the compassionate attention of Miss Burton. She took care to have both mother and children supplied with the best food the smack could afford, and she regularly administered cordials to the sick child herself. From her own wardrobe, with the aid of the other ladies, who warmly sympathized in her pity for this helpless family, she furnished them with plenty of clothing; and before they left the Hebe, a small sum was collected to enable them to reach their friends in circumstances as comfortable as their case would admit. The poor widow parted from us with tears of gratitude, im-

ploring blessings on us all for the kindness she had experienced.

No other incident worthy of relation occurred during the voyage, which passed very pleasantly. Miss Burton's two companions were, a mother and her daughter, who resided in London, but were of Scotch extraction. I received from them a pressing invitation to make their house my home, and this invitation was warmly seconded by Miss Burton, who also told me, that she was to reside with them, and could freely invite any friend. The Captain, however, would not allow me to leave him so abruptly; so that, on arriving at the wharf, we parted with mutual regret.

When the Hebe was moored, I accompanied Captain L. to the house of his brother-in-law, a respectable merchant in the city, where we were kindly received by the family, and told that we should be considered their guests during our stay. There was so much novelty here, that, for some time, recollections of the past, and anticipations of the future, were almost banished.

One morning, Captain L. asked me when I intended to visit my sea nymphs. Upon my expressing some reluctance ;—" Psha !" said he, " you know not how to profit by a fair breeze :—come, I have a little leisure this forenoon, let us take the trip !"

We set off, and were ushered into a superb drawing-room, where we were welcomed with that frank and genuine politeness, which is the natural expression of kindness of heart. After chatting for some time, Miss Burton invited the Captain and me into another room, and immediately introduced the subject of the unhappy prisoner; and seeing that his impending fate still preyed upon my spirits, she told me to keep myself as easy as possible; that something might occur favourable to him; but that, in the meantime, it would not be prudent for me to return to Scotland, unless I could make up my mind to assist the arm of justice on the culprit. An involuntary horror seized me at the thought, and my blood recoiled to my heart. Observing my change of countenance; " Well," said she, " I see you

are the dupe of your feelings; trust to the chapter of accidents, and all may yet be well. How are you to dispose of yourself here? We have an excursion to make to the country, and want a beau, will you do us the favour to accompany us?" Imagining that there would be an impropriety in dangling in the train of fashionable ladies, I urged, as an apology for declining their invitation, that I had promised to accompany Captain L. to Ireland, for which he was to sail in a few days, expressing a very strong desire to see the green hills of Erin. Miss Burton replied, that if I could get rid of romantic sentiment, and that bashful diffidence, which was both uncommon and unnecessary in the world, I might be good for something, but she was afraid that I must be set down as incurable. After taking leave of the ladies, the captain exclaimed, "I can't, for the soul of me, fathom this Miss Burton:—she dresses like other fine ladies, —she lives in a splendid style,—and yet, somehow, one gets quite at ease in her company: I never saw her do an action, or

heard her utter a sentence, that I would disapprove of in my wife or daughter; and yet, I can't tell how, I never knew any lady so easy, and, at the same time, so polite.—This is the second time she has sailed with me, and, in both trips, I have seen several instances of her being a devilish good-hearted wench." I assented to the captain's opinion, having more cause for it than he imagined.

Amidst the varied and inexhaustible amusements of the metropolis, my thoughts still recurred to the state of the unfortunate criminal, and longed for a change of scene with as much impatience, as if I had been thus to escape from all concern about his probable fate. We sailed for Ireland with a fine breeze, and reached Cork, the place of our destination, all well, with my spirits a little revived by the sea air and the novelty of all around me. On our return, while coming down the Channel, a violent gale arose about midnight.—The captain appearing to be much alarmed, my fears rose in proportion, and every moment became more overpowering, from

the impenetrable darkness that surrounded us. While all hands were in a bustle, the Hebe and another vessel ran foul of each other, by which accident the Hebe's bowsprit was carried away. Captain L. called down to me not to be afraid, for the danger was now over, and the gale slackening, but requested me to go to bed, as he was now busy, and would see me in the morning.

Finding that I would only be a hindrance on deck, I took his advice, and tumbled into bed, but could not sleep: I thought of home, my parents, the poor prisoner, and, by a natural chain of association, of Miss Burton,—then fell into a slumber, while musing on her amiable qualities, during which the image of my lovely Miss B. took possession of my fancy; and we were translating together one of Petrarch's sonnets, when a noise upon deck disturbed my dream of felicity.

I was surprised to find it so late in the morning, and more so when I found there was no motion in the ship: Captain L. soon

after came in smiling, and bade me welcome to Portsmouth harbour; told me what had happened during the night, and that he had run in here to refit, which would take some days. During all that day Captain L. was occupied in directing and superintending the necessary repairs: next day he proposed crossing over to the Isle of Wight, where the beauty of the scenery would compensate me for my late tossing and alarm.

We arrived at Cowes a little before dinner, and waited upon a gentleman with whom my friend the Captain had some business to transact; but he was just gone to his country-house, and was not to return that night: Captain L., who was anxious to see him, proposed, therefore, that we should walk after him. When something more than half way, my companion stopped to speak with a gentleman whom we met, while I jogged on, till a phaeton, in which I observed two ladies, came forward to meet me with inconceivable rapidity. I soon discovered that the horse had taken fright, and that

the ladies had lost the reins: in a moment I heard their screams. Between them and me there was an angle in the road, which was raised over a chasm, and I immediately saw that they were in imminent danger of being overturned, and most probably dashed in pieces. I rushed forward, and seized the horse just in time to prevent the dreadful catastrophe, which otherwise must inevitably have happened, as the horse was coming straight forward. By this time the Captain was come up; but what was the astonishment of all, when the ladies were discovered to be Miss Burton and her young London companion.

The ladies were lifted out, and some time was spent in mutual expressions of surprise and congratulation. I now felt that I had got a sprained ancle, being utterly incapable of walking; and upon looking down, I observed blood issuing through my stocking. The ladies following my eye, saw it; and now became, I believe, as much alarmed for me, as they had recently been for themselves.

As I could not walk, and had no vehicle at hand, except the phaeton, which the ladies declared they would not again enter, we were rather at a loss. Fortunately a country lad came up, apparently breathless, and addressing the Captain, said, he saw the horse run away, and was afraid of the consequences; inquired if the ladies were safe, and seemed to take an interest in their fate beyond what was to be expected from one in his apparent rank in life. The ladies requested of him to take charge of the phaeton to Cowes, telling him, that if he returned in half an hour with a post chaise, he should have half-a-guinea for his trouble. In the mean time, as the day was fine, we all sat down on the bank; my ancle was examined; I felt it was severely sprained, and had now swelled considerably: the blood proceeded from its being grazed with the horse's foot; it was bound up with a handkerchief; and we resolved to exercise a little patience.

The messenger arrived with a chaise in less than half an hour. Captain L. took

the ladies' address, and walked forward to his friends, while the ladies and I were driven into Cowes, where a surgeon was immediately procured.—He was a man of sense and candour; and told me that the sprain was severe, but as no dislocation had taken place, ease and regular embrocations would soon restore it. The flesh wound was of less consequence, and would require only a few dressings to give no further trouble.

When the ladies had recovered from their alarm, and were satisfied that I was in no real danger, they hailed me as their deliverer, telling me, in a bantering way, that although I had declined to accompany them, fate had again brought us together, and made me their companion and prisoner in spite of myself. Next morning Captain L. called to know whether I would be able to accompany him to Portsmouth; this the ladies most strenuously opposed; and the surgeon, arriving soon after, gave his *veto* against my leaving Cowes, until my limb should be in a much sounder state.—Cap-

tain L. took his leave, saying that he would return in two days, by which time he expected the Hebe to be ready for sea, and hoped I should then be able to accompany him. Being now an invalid, the ladies were kind enough to keep me company during the greater part of the time. Next day Miss Burton received several letters and a newspaper; after looking over the paper, she handed it to me, saying, significantly, that it was an Edinburgh paper; and that I might probably find some articles of local intelligence to amuse me. After running my eye over the pages, it rested on the following paragraph:

"Last night, or early this morning, a man escaped from gaol here. He was imprisoned some time ago, upon a charge of issuing forged notes; the evidence, it is believed, would have been conclusive against him: he had persisted in refusing to tell his name or connexions; and always appeared very melancholy and dejected: different accounts are given of the manner of his escape, which shall be related when we

obtain accurate information. A reward is offered for apprehending him. (See advertisement)."

Upon turning to that, I saw the reward twenty guineas. The glow that had begun to exhilarate my frame, was considerably checked by the recollection of the new risk which he incurred. Still the great oppression that I felt was removed, as I was persuaded that he had a considerable chance of escape.

When Miss Johnson, Miss Burton's friend, withdrew, the latter congratulated me upon the relief that my feelings would receive, now that the prisoner had escaped. I expressed my fears that he would be retaken: Miss Burton replied, "There is little danger of that: he has been assisted, and I have no doubt the plan has been well laid; we shall therefore, if you please, now dismiss him from our thoughts, with the hope that if we ever again hear of him, it will be more to his credit."

My friend, Captain L., having got the Hebe ready for sea, came again to Cowes,

to announce that the Hebe was now in sailing condition. "What cheer now, my lad?" said he, "are all your timbers sound again? We must weigh anchor!" My grateful and kind entertainers strenuously remonstrated against my departure; they urged that, under Providence, they both owed their lives to me; that I had sustained considerable injury, and even hazarded my life in promoting their safety; and therefore they were unwilling that we should separate till they arrived in London. As the Captain, however, was a man of business, and as I might be considered part of his cargo, they had no objections, they said, to give a receipt for me in due form, binding themselves to deliver me to him or order, in good condition, bating sea hazard, unruly horses, and other accidents of the road. Some further wit was played off on the occasion; but I had previously determined upon returning with the Hebe, being anxious to hear from my parents, and to return to my native land.

Seeing that I was inflexible, they made the necessary preparations for my departure; but I thought that both, particularly Miss Burton, appeared rather disappointed. They took Captain L.'s address, and made me promise not to leave London till their arrival.

Our voyage was pleasant, and my friendly Captain said, that as he was to push for Leith as speedily as possible, I had better wait the arrival of the ladies, who, he was convinced, had the wish, and perhaps the power, to serve me. He would return in about four weeks; and in the meantime would introduce me to a few of his friends, who would enable me to pass the time agreeably. While deliberating upon this, I received two letters, one I saw was from my father, the other in a hand-writing which I did not know. I gave my father's letter the precedence, and found that he and my mother were well, but in great anxiety about their only son. The contents of the other was as follows:

"Miss Johnson and Miss Burton present their best wishes to Mr Campbell, their preserver, and expect to see him in London about a week hence; in the meantime, as he is detained waiting for them, they beg that the enclosed may be applied as needful: and as Mr Campbell is sometimes troubled with scruples and fastidious modesty, the amount may be placed to their credit till accounts are balanced between the parties."

The enclosure was a bank note for twenty pounds.

Unfortunately for me, Captain L.'s friends were all men of business; and while they convinced me of their hospitable dispositions, I felt that I was sometimes an incumbrance to them; and even when we met, we had few sentiments and associations of mutual interest to engage us in agreeable conversation. I was now in the emporium of wealth, commerce, literature, and science; yet I wandered about like a ghost, without speaking, till another should break silence: and in this state I might have languished

for ever. Every one whom I saw in the countless crowds that surrounded me was busy, and seemed to have some object in view; and I believed myself the only idler on the streets, amidst the immense multitude in motion around me.

CHAPTER XI.

I am your wife, if you will marry me;
———————— to be your fellow
You may deny me, but I will be your friend
Whether you will or no.

SHAKSPEARE.

ONE morning, in passing a bookseller's window in St Paul's church-yard, I saw "Liberty of Conscience, a Sermon, by a Clergyman of the Church of Scotland; printed at Edinburgh, reprinted at London." The text on the title was that of my hapless production, already mentioned in these memoirs. Upon walking in, and asking to see the phamphlet, I found it was my own first-born bantling, to which was attached a preface by the publisher, stating, that the unfortunate author had been obliged to flee from the church where it was delivered, after his life was in im-

minent danger from the bigotry of his audience.

I entered into conversation with the bookseller, and asked him if he knew these circumstances to be true; to which he replied in the affirmative.

"Do you know the author?" "Not personally." "What is he—or where does he reside?" "You see he is a clergyman, and, as I believe, still resides in Scotland; never obtained a living; and is condemned to poverty and neglect!" "Does he merit any attention?" "Why, yes sir, the fellow has talent, if he could or durst apply it; but he is a fool—I mean for himself; fettered in legal and clerical trammels, he seems afraid to follow up his own reasoning: he dares not venture a single hair breadth beyond the boundaries of orthodoxy; and hovers in the clouds, when he shews wing for soaring to the skies. Still it will not avail him.—A living can only be obtained from a patron; and where is the patron that would think of settling a minister for his abilities in writing or preaching sermons? The merits

of this very discourse are lost to the world, from its bearing the title of a sermon. Of those who from habit, (or something that they imagine a duty,) read sermons, nine out of ten will be displeased with the liberality of his sentiments, provided they have capacity to understand them; and those who would bestow their approbation, never think of looking for rational and philosophical argumentation in a sermon. As a pulpit production the thing is good, but it is unknown; however, I hope to push off a few, not so much for the profit of sale, as to promote that gradual emancipation from superstition, which I yet expect to see accomplished. The short preface I have attached to it has given it some notoriety, and helps to disseminate that disgust at superstition and priestcraft, which I trust will soon be universal. We must remove prejudices gently, and work upon some minds almost imperceptibly;—this sermon will operate in preparing the way for such authors as speak more plainly." He went on much farther, till it appeared evident to me

that he was an enemy not only to all religious establishments, but even to religion, under any form whatever: and as I conceived that it would be losing both time and labour to engage in an argument with him, I purchased a copy of my own sermon, and walked out of the shop.

On my way home, I could not help being strongly impressed with the strange and opposite purposes to which the plainest didactic work may be applied. Here was a sermon which I had written with the direct intention of its being a barrier and support to rational Christianity, and I now found it republished, by one who avowed openly that he sent it abroad as the harbinger of infidelity. I began now to tremble, lest he should have taken freedoms in garbling my composition, or in altering my meaning, to suit his own purposes; and hurried to my lodgings, that I might peruse it with attention, determined, if it was so, to have no mercy, but to pursue him with legal vengeance, forgetting that, as there was no author's name given, this

would be impracticable; however, my fears were groundless, and, although alone, I was forced to smile at the pride of authorship, and felt half ashamed of this fondness for the first bantling of my brain.

Having amused myself some days longer, without any thing remarkable occurring, I became impatient for Captain L.'s return, when I received a card from Miss Johnson's mother, inviting me to dine next day in Bloomsbury-square. The party was select and very agreeable. After the cloth was removed, Mrs Johnson related the adventure of the phaeton in the isle of Wight, introducing me to the company as the preserver of her daughter's life. She expressed her gratitude and inability to discharge the obligation; for, as no pecuniary obligation could be adequate, she would neither insult me, nor degrade herself by the offer; at the same time, presenting me with a very handsome gold watch and its appendages, she insisted upon my acceptance of it, as a mark of her gratitude, and a pledge of her friend-

ship whenever it could be useful to me. There was something so affable and easy in the manner of all the party, that I could not refuse what was so handsomely proffered. We talked, chatted, and laughed away the evening, and I took my leave, with a promise to repeat my visit.

When other two weeks passed away, Captain L. returned, and, upon shaking hands with him, I felt a sensation quite different from what usually follows that expression of friendship. I cannot explain it, but knew that it arose from the circumstance of his having so recently quitted my native country, on which account I thought him allied to me by a sort of kindred. The philosopher, who boasts of being a citizen of the world, will probably laugh at this—let him do so; I felt that in London I was a stranger, and although, when I began to abstract reasoning, the preference, in point of climate and wealth, was due to England, still I felt that I was not at home; and although my native land

had been only, as it were, a step-mother to me, I still retained for it a strong filial affection.

Being now fully resolved upon taking my passage in the Hebe, I waited upon my friends in Bloomsbury square, to communicate my intentions, and take farewell. Miss Burton said that her time was also expired, and being to return to Bramblebrae, she could not have a fitter opportunity. Captain L. was her old acquaintance, and I might again save her life by water, as I had already done by land. Mrs L. had accompanied her husband this voyage, and, as she was to return with him, it was expected that our little party would be very agreeable.

The afternoon previous to our departure was spent in Bloomsbury square, and we separated from our friends with mutual assurances of most respectful esteem. We arrived safe at Leith after a very pleasant passage of five, days, and being anxious to see my parents, I resolved upon pushing forward next day. Miss Burton insisted

that we should dine together before our separation. There was something in her manner so easy, and, at the same time, so peculiarly her own, that, while one felt doubtful whether all her plans were consistent with strict propriety, her address made it almost impossible to oppose them. She told me, before parting, that she was to set off next morning in a post chaise, and, as fifty miles of my journey lay in the same direction, I could not do better than accompany her. Here again was one of her schemes, in which there was nothing morally wrong; still I had doubts of its being consonant to the rules of rigid decorum. However, by means of her own raillery, with Captain L. as an auxiliary, my scruples were overcome, and I consented to take a seat in the chaise. I slept at Captain L.'s, where the chaise called for me in the morning; I felt the blood mounting to my cheek as I ascended the steps; however, I was seated, and away we hurled. Miss Burton doubtless perceived my confusion, and laying aside a little of her natural gayety, led the conver-

sation to topics of rational discussion, in which she exhibited a degree of intellect, that did credit to her as a woman, and was to me (who knew the deficiences, not to say errors, of her early education,) matter of agreeable surprise.

By regular changes of horses, we reached the stage in the evening where our roads separated. Miss Burton pretended a little fatigue, and, after a slight repast, rose to retire. When, just leaving the room, she handed me a letter, which she requested me to peruse, and she would receive its reply in the morning after breakfast. So saying she withdrew; with much surprise, I read as follows:

"Dear Sir,—In the progress of our acquaintance you have perhaps set me down as an outré character. That I pay little respect to many of the fastidious rules of etiquette, so long as my motives are good, I readily acknowledge; and this letter will furnish you with the strongest evidence of the fact, as it will exhibit my departure from what has long and generally been con-

sidered an essential point of decorum in my sex. Although I have always thought the married state necessary to produce all the happiness of which human nature is susceptible, yet I have allowed time to witness my delay, till he has seized his pen to record my name in the register of old maids. I say *allowed*, for I have indeed refused offers, perhaps better than I had any right to expect, only they did not suit my capricious and wayward fancy.

"I have known you long, and my esteem for you has ripened into that regard, which now prompts me to offer you a willing hand, and, I think, an affectionate, honest heart. I do not pretend to be dying of love; but I freely acknowledge, that with you for my companion and protector, life would, in my estimation, have more value. Of all the men I have yet seen, I consider you as the best qualified to promote my happiness, and do assure you, that my best endeavours should be unremittingly exercised to promote yours in return.

" Although perfectly assured that you

have a soul above every mercenary motive, yet it may not be unnecessary to say, that I am possessed of a competence sufficient for us both.

"I believe that I already have a considerable share of your esteem, and am not that romantic girl to think that *violent* love is indispensably necessary to domestic felicity. Mutual rectitude of conduct, plain sense, and good nature, are, in my opinion, more essential requisites.

"I have been candid with you, and expect reciprocal sincerity in return. You will not, I am persuaded, esteem me less, that I have, in the present instance, overstepped the modesty (I will not say of nature, but) of custom. I am also well convinced, that, should I be doomed to the mortification of a refusal, you will consider me worthy of knowing your reasons, and capable of weighing them with temper and prudence; for I know you sufficiently to believe that you will not give a reason unworthy of yourself, or that can lesson you in my estimation. Whatever may be your deter-

mination, be assured, my dear sir, that I will calmly hear it. Some foolish poet, I have forgotten who, writes as follows:

> 'There is no fury like a woman scorned,
> Nor hell like love to hatred turned.'

Be not afraid of this; I know that you never will scorn me. If I gain not your heart as a lover, I trust that I shall preserve it as a friend. And be assured, that you must cease to be what I have ever known you, before it become possible for me to hate you.

"The only way that you can, at present, forfeit any part of my respect and esteem, would be, by leaving me here without our fully understanding each other; I therefore expect to meet you to-morrow morning at breakfast. My putting this into your hands, proves how highly I estimate your honour. You may prevent me from adding a more endearing appellation, but shall never make me renounce that of—your most sincere friend, E. BURTON."

Here was a dilemma! I had not a heart

for love. All that I had ever felt of that passion was buried beneath the turf that covered Maria B.'s dust! But Miss Burton did not insist upon love, she believed herself possessed of my esteem, and gave me credit for good qualities, sufficient, in her opinion, to promote domestic happiness. I was poor, without the prospect of being richer; she was in possession of independence, which she frankly offered to participate with me. Although she had not all that feminine softness of manner, and loveliness of external appearance, which is generally so fascinating, her stature was tall, her form and air graceful; without any pretensions to beauty, her features were regular and agreeable; and what was of infinitely more value, she had good sense, was affable, condescending, good-natured, candid and easy in her manner, and had exhibited many symptoms of benevolence and goodness of heart. With these qualities, the interest that she had taken in my affairs, seemed a reasonable security for my domestic felicity.

How was I to decide? What was the conduct which prudence and honour dictated in this delicate situation?

Feeling that I could not have the benefit of counsel in this matter, it cost me little trouble to form my resolution; but it was not till after several attempts, that I framed the following letter:

"Madam,—After having laid me under many previous obligations, you have now rendered me your debtor, infinitely beyond what I can ever pay. The sincerity which you exhibit requires and merits equal candour from me; and my knowledge of your heart warrants me in believing that I shall not forfeit your esteem, by explicit obedience to your injunctions, and a humble endeavour to imitate your example. For the opinion that you entertain of me, so far beyond what I deserve, and for the honour you have done me, be assured, that I feel a gratitude which words are inadequate to express.

"Believe me, when I say, that of all your sex, you hold the first place in my es-

teem. Most cheerfully would I lay down my life to promote your happiness; and yet, alas! I have not a heart to bestow.

"When Maria B.'s spirit was disembodied, I felt that I never could love another; still these feelings are unaltered. Politeness is an accomplishment, but sincerity is a virtue; and even from you, madam, I would much rather bear the charge of rudeness, than stand self-convicted of having acted deceitfully. I know that you will laugh at my romantic notions, and perhaps say that imagination alone has raised up to you a rival in my heart. Be it so; I should degrade myself, as well as injure and insult you, were I to pledge my hand, while my heart palpitates every time that memory restores *her* image, who is now no more.

"In obedience to your commands, I shall meet you at breakfast; but as my mind is unalterable, I beg that no allusion may be made to the subject.

"Well persuaded that your virtues and amiable qualities are sufficient to make some

worthy man happy, my most earnest wish is, that they may meet the reward and protection which they so amply merit. Trusting that, by this candid declaration, I have not forfeited your friendship, I beg leave to assure you, that I shall always think of you with respect and grateful esteem; and am, madam, your much honoured, obliged, and sincere friend, W. CAMPBELL."

As soon as I knew that Miss Burton was astir, I sent up my letter, and took a walk in the fields to tranquillize my mind for a meeting which I would most gladly have avoided. Most fortunately, a chaise with company arrived before breakfast, and, as they appeared respectable, Miss Burton very prudently proposed that we should all breakfast together; she did the honours of the table, talked, and even laughed, with such apparent ease as surprised me. Will it be believed, that although this was exactly what I wished, yet it disappointed me; perhaps it would have pleased my pride better to have seen Miss Burton not quite so easy, even while my heart and rea-

son were anxious to promote her happiness. Those who have well studied their own hearts, will most readily credit this apparent paradox.

Before we left the breakfast table, I twice caught her eyes fixed on me, but some children at table gave me an opportunity of escaping embarrassment, by little attentions to them. After breakfast, I retired to my room, enclosed Miss Burton's letter to her, accompanied by the following note:

"MADAM,—The enclosed was safe enough in my hands, but, to prevent accidents, it has occurred to me that it is still safer in your own, and I esteem your honour too highly, to leave aught in the power of chance, calumny, or idle gossiping, when the mode of prevention is both easy and proper. I am, &c. W. C."

After Miss Burton had received this note, we met by accident; she told me that she would set off in an hour, and requested that I would have the goodness to stop and see her depart. This I wished to have avoided; but there was no alternative short of down-

right rudeness; I therefore agreed. In about half an hour she came down, and seeing me in the garden, immediately joined me, and after some trifling observations, addressed me thus:

"Dear Mr Campbell, you have disappointed, but not offended me; although I do think your feelings romantic, yet be assured I respect them. I have long esteemed you, and now do so more than ever, for you have shewn me what tenderness and attachment I should have enjoyed, could I have taken the place of Maria B. in your heart. You must write me the history of your first and only love, if it will not be too painful a task. Accept my thanks for your candour, and also for the peculiar delicacy exhibited in your last note. I wish you still to respect me, and to calculate on my lasting and sincere friendship." Soon after, the carriage drove up to the door; I assisted her in; she pressed my hand, saying, in a soft voice, "Adieu! and remember!" and immediately drove off.

For some minutes I stood rivetted to the

spot, lost in a strange abstraction of mind; and, upon recovering, my confusion was increased by perceiving, that I was observed by the people of the house.

Upon retiring to my room, I gave myself up for some time to the tumult of my emotions; my thoughts naturally turned, "in forward and reverted view," to my past vicissitudes, and future prospects; and the crowd of recollections and anticipations, conjured up by memory and fancy, rendered my mind a chaos, in which all was undefined, but appalling gloom. To relieve it from this distracting confusion, I resolved to hurry home, and to endeavour to exclude every overpowering reflection, and to allow it to dwell upon indifferent objects, till it should, in some degree, recover its order and tranquillity.

CHAPTER XII.

Oh! it offends me to the soul to hear a robusteous periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings; who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shew and noise.

SHAKSPEARE.

No virgin's easy faith I e'er betray'd.

HAMMOND.

As my journey could not be accomplished in one day, I stopped, towards sunset, at a small village alehouse, which offered the most eligible asylum I was likely to find for the evening.

A party of strolling players had been for some time performing there, and there was some difficulty in procuring lodgings; however, the landlady said, that as I had the

appearance of a gentleman, she would probably get the manager to give up his bed to me, which she would furnish with clean linen; but they were just now in the bustle of preparation for playing, this being the last night, and she was afeard she would not get words of him till the play was over; but as there was no other inn on the road, and it was getting darkish, she thought I might stay upon chance. I resolved to take her advice, and as I had a long evening before me, I thought I might as well pass it off by seeing the performance.

The theatre was a pretty large barn, which, with considerable ingenuity, had been converted into a tolerably convenient receptacle for the rustic auditory, as it possessed the genteel divisions of pit and gallery, the latter being about three feet more elevated than the former.

The entertainments for the night were, "Hamlet," and "The Gentle Shepherd" as an after-piece. I took my seat between an excise-officer and the parish-midwife. The house filled even to crowding. The cause

I understood, was, that as the performers were just about to depart, and not overstocked with cash, the landlord of the inn, and some others to whom they were indebted, had been very active in the sale of tickets. With the exception of the manager and another, they were indeed wretched performers, and as miserably attired.

The tragedy would have been laughable, had it not been for an incidental episode. When the ghost appeared, I half started, from the momentary impression that it was some inhabitant of the neighbouring churchyard, for he seemed not to have had a meal for a month past.

When the grave was digging, I heard a secret but serious consultation behind me, about the farmer having human bones in his barn-floor. Some sage matrons insisted that it should be intimated to the minister, and the farmer obliged either to clear himself, or stand his trial for murder. At the appearance of the *skull*, a kind of involuntary shriek burst from the females in the assembly. I over-heard one of the farmer's maid servants

say to a strapping fellow, who held her half on his knee, "Oh Tammas, Tammas! I'll never meet you in this barn again! I wad be feard out o' my wits; L—d kens what's been done here, or how many ghaists gang about at e'en!" "Tut fool!" said he, "'tis a' glamour, never fash your head about them!" "Na, na, Tammas! I ken o'er weel! ye mith as weel deny the Bible—d'ye na see thae banes? Oh Tammas! d'ye mind yon night? I'm sure I'll never forget it—I saw my mither's ghaist as I gaed out at the back door—Ye ken yoursel'—I ken o'er weel! Oh—Oh!"—Her sobs now became audible over the house, and she was carried out in a hysteric fit. The company, in general, attributed the poor girl's disorder to being frightened at the performance, which, after a short interruption, went on to a "most lame and impotent conclusion."

If the tragedy was laughable, "The Gentle Shepherd" threatened to be tragical. After much mouthing and repetitions of all the tones, accents, and inflexions, between Cornwall and John o' Groat's House, which

produced a jargon, neither Scotch, English, nor wild Irish, the scene took place between Mause, Madge, and Bauldy; and, as it appeared from the result, that the representative of Bauldy had been so unfortunate as not only to incur the displeasure of the company, but also of the two viragos with whom he was now treading the boards, they took the opportunity of wreaking their revenge on him by a most severe castigation. He escaped from their clutches with his nose truly bleeding, and some parts of his dress in great disorder; when, turning upon Mause, he lifted his foot with vehemence, and brought it with such hearty good will on that part of the poor old tottering body, which was last in sight, as she left the stage, that he at last tripled the velocity of her motion. The audience had not been taught to hiss, but they expressed their indignation in forcible terms, and "brute," "beast," "monster," would have echoed from every quarter of the barn, had echo ever resided there.

The performers were now getting into confusion, and the audience had never been

quiet; the manager therefore came forward, made a handsome apology for the rudeness of his understrappers, and said he would conclude the entertainment of the evening with a parting address. He had repeated two or three couplets, (which appeared neat if not elegant composition,) when one of the performers sprung from the stage, seized the midwife who sat next me by the arm, and dragged her across the stage: screams of direful accent were heard from the dressing room, and the curtain dropped.

The exciseman accompanied me to the alehouse, when, after sitting a little, he asked if I had any objections to joining him in a bit of supper. I expressed my consent, provided he would permit our histrionic manager to be of the party, as I believed I was to be under some obligation to him for my bed. The manager was sent for—he came in—and I thought looked as if he recognized me. The landlady mentioned her request; he, with genuine politeness, replied, that he felt infinite pleasure in having it in his power to oblige me, and he only regretted that the favour was so trifling.

We had a tolerable supper, enlivened with good humour and excellent whiskey; the landlady having, at the gauger's request, produced her family bottle. The manager told us that before he left the theatre, Jenny, the maiden prude, had been delivered of a thumping boy in the green room; which he had wrapped in Ophelia's mantle, and delivered to Mause; while Roger, the bantling's father, had wrapped the mother in his plaid, and carried her to their lodgings at the other end of the village.

The manager appeared to be about nineteen or twenty years of age, and we found him a fellow of good sense, apparently aided by a liberal education, while, like the Yorick whom he that evening described, he was "a fellow of infinite jest and humour."

I expressed my surprize, that a man of his qualifications should devote himself to a trade which appeared to me both low and unprofitable.

"You are right sir," said he, "it is low enough to be the leader of such a crew;

and as to the profit, it too often sends us supperless to bed; my *reasons* for thus degrading myself, were I to state them, you would perhaps think *unreasonable:* however, I believe I must renounce it, not exactly because I wish to do so, but from a more powerful cause,—it starves me both in back and belly. Not one of the troop but is indebted to me; and I have a long score with our landlord, which must be rubbed out to-morrow: and there is that poor fellow, who was Roger to-night—his wife, Jenny, (as I already told you) was delivered of a boy since the curtain dropped, and to my certain knowledge he has not a shilling in his pocket."

At this moment a voice was heard without our room door, speaking in a tone of entreaty; the response was in a shrill angry key. "There! that's he," said the manager: "Hist!" "O do, my good landlady! be not so hard-hearted; you are a mother yourself; think of my poor wife!" 'I must think of myself and my children; what business has any ragamuffin like you

wi' a wife, wha canna maintain her?—I tell you I'm likely to lose enough by your trumpery pack already!" I took the opportunity of slipping to the door, and seeing the landlady with her arms akimbo, asked if she could let me have a bottle of good wine, 'Yes, an' please your honour, as good's in Scotland!' The poor disconsolate Roger turned his head, and I heard him heave a bitter sigh.

The landlady tripped off to her cellar; "My good fellow, said I, "I wish you joy; although the birth of your son may produce anxiety to your mind at present, I hope he will live to be your future comfort." —The landlady was bouncing into the room with the wine, which I seized, saying, "Here, carry this home to your wife, make her a little negus—but stop, you want sugar!" "Here it is," said the obsequious landlady, handing a pound from a cupboard in the passage. "Then, take this loaf too," said I, snatching one from the same receptacle, and slipping half a guinea into his hand. Prompt as players generally are in

language, the poor fellow could not articulate a word of thanks,—but he looked them infinitely more emphatically, and vanished with the rapidity of lightning.

Upon my entering the room, "Your good health, and thank you most kindly," said the manager: "what you have done has saved me something, for although I might have been less liberal, I must have done what I could."

The exciseman, who had hitherto spoken little, now began to criticise the performers, most ill-naturedly, although perhaps justly, and wondered how the d—l they could dare to represent characters, of which they seemed to have no adequate conception. The manager admitted that they were but indifferent performers; but urged, that they had an unanswerable plea for what they did; namely, necessity. "Hang them! can't they work?" said the gauger. "Perhaps they have never been accustomed to labour," said I: "So much the worse!" replied the exciseman. "Pray, my dear sir," interrupted the manager, "what occupation

were you bred to, before entering into the excise?" "None, sir." "Well, and if the commissioners should take it into their heads to dismiss you, as I believe some very honest and good officers have been treated before now—could you work? what would you set about, for which you are well qualified?—answer me candidly!" "Upon my word, sir, I hardly can!" "Well then, my good sir, should you find no better resource than that of entering into my ragged regiment—are you certain that you would please the public better, than my poor strollers have satisfied you to night?" This terrible tax-gatherer, the pest of publicans, and bugbear of smugglers, bit his lips, and sate in solemn silence.

"Come, fill up another glass," cried the hero of the buskin, "all in good humour: although a young man, I know the world sufficiently, not to take offence at observations, which may sometimes controvert my own opinions;—I often take the same freedom with the public that it does with me; for although dependent on their opinion. I

cannot forget that I possess the faculty of thinking. To close the discussion that you and I were upon, I would just beg of you to reflect how few of the great mass of mankind have it in their power to do just what they wish to do, while the rest must do just what they can.—If this is awkwardly performed, still they are objects of pity, rather than of censure; for all have a right to live, and he who exercises the best means in his power to procure a livelihood, provided the means are honest, is surely blameless." The gauger either was convinced, or pretended to be so, and being now a little elevated with toddy, shook the manager by the hand, told him he was a fine fellow, and to clench his assertion, flung half-a-crown upon the table, which he requested the manager to give to Jenny the first opportunity.

The exciseman departed, and we separated for the night. Having indulged myself with a glass more than I was accustomed to, I slept late, which brought the theatrical hero again into my company in the morning. Having discovered that

we were to travel the same road, he proposed, if I had no objections, we should go in company, to which common politeness commanded my assent. We parted, agreeing to start in half an hour: about that time, he sent me a note, wishing to see me in another room. There I found him and the landlord; the latter looking rather sulky. The player addressed me thus, "Sir, I have got into a small scrape here: my account with this host of mine has rather outrun my finances: I am three pounds *minus*, without a shilling to bear my expenses, or remove our baggage to the next town, where we are again to "hold the mirror up to nature!" I have solicited him to take my note, at a month's date, for five guineas, and give me two pounds; this he refuses, and threatens to arrest our wardrobe, scenery, &c.; this would really be taking a man's tools, and then ordering him to work to discharge his debt. I am by profession a strolling player—by law a vagabond. Now that I am leaving the village, I am aware that not one in it would credit me the tithe

of the sum that I want. I am ashamed to take such a freedom with a stranger; but, 'my poverty and not my will consents,' when I now say, that by advancing me five guineas, upon my note, at one month, you will do me a singular favour; and if I do not happen to be either hanged or banished, when it falls due, you shall receive payment.—If either of these events takes place, you will most probably lose your money. I can offer no other security; will you take your risk?" There was something so odd in the fellow's manner, that, without speaking, I put the money into his hand. He pressed mine with a fervour which indicated that I had relieved him from deep embarrassment. He was preparing to make out a note; I told him it was unnecessary; that I was, like himself, poor, but able to accommodate him at present, although I should ere long have occasion for the money; and that I should rely upon his honour for payment as soon as convenient. He took my address for this purpose, and settled with his landlord, who, I observed, leered to his wife at my simplicity.

We set out on our journey, and, as he was genteely and cleanly dressed, I had no occasion to be ashamed of my companion. We had proceeded about a mile from the village, where our road, on both sides, was thickly sheltered with wood, when, from a hillock beneath a cluster of bushes, up started a young girl, of a rather interesting appearance; her age seemed to be about twenty; she seized my companion by the hand, while her eyes swam in tears, and I now recognised her as the daughter of the landlord whom we had just left. "What is the matter, Mary?" said my companion, apparently surprised. "Oh, sir, I canna part wi' you,—I'll follow you, gang whare you like!"

"No, Mary, that will not do at all; you are a good girl, and must not ruin yourself with me,—I am a stroller,—a vagabond, —and cannot provide for myself, much less for you."

"We winna starve, sir. See there's a hundred pounds; it's a' my ain—was left me by my uncle—an' I took it up last night; I kent ye was in debt to my father, an' would

have gien ye the siller, but coudna get word's o' ye; but now I'll gang through the warld wi' ye; I can dance, sing *purely*, an', as I am a scholar, will soon learn my lesson frae your play-books; I cou'd read the Gentle Shepherd langsyne. You'll aye be Patie to me, an' I shall for ever be your kind an' faithfu' Peggy."

"Indeed, my dear girl, this cannot be; you must not ruin yourself thus—I cannot marry you."

I now began anxiously to scan both their faces, whether I could discover any signs of previous guilt in either. In his, I could trace only dignity and manly concern for an infatuated girl; and in hers, every feature indicated fondness and innocent simplicity. However, as I had been made an involuntary spectator of this strange scene, I now took the liberty of asking both parties, if this was their first clandestine meeting. He assured me, upon his honour, that it was; that he never yet, by word or action, seduced innocence, and, he hoped, never would. The girl also declared that he had

never courted her; "but," said she, "I saw him ilka night, sae strappin' an' genteel, that I coudna sleep for thinking about him, and last night, when he appeared as Patie, I made up my mind."

"Come, come, Mary," said he, "we must part; you must go home to your parents; you know there is farmer Brown, whom I saw sit every night beside you in the pit; I am certain he wishes to marry you; he is a good lad, and will make a better husband than ever I could do; go, like a good girl; if you are missed at home, conjectures may be formed unfavourable to your reputation. When farmer Brown comes again into your company, give him every decent encouragement; get married, and I shall be always glad to see or hear of your happiness."

The girl now burst into tears, crying out, "Oh, sir, I see you despise me;—but dinna think me a light glaiket hussie;—I care about nae man but yoursel'; an' wi' you I cou'd beg my bread!"

Seeing that my companion was now in

earnest, I joined my remonstrances and entreaties to his, assuring her, that if she would not be persuaded to return, we would both go back, and deliver her up to her father; but as this would unavoidably expose her, we begged her to go back of her own accord. With a deep drawn sigh, she reluctantly agreed. My companion shook hands with her, and bade her farewell; and we contrived to keep her in view till she entered the village. The player appeared very much vexed at this adventure, and still affirmed, that upon no occasion had he even flirted with her, or had the slightest reason to expect the present rencontre. We had nearly twenty miles to walk together, during which he exhibited much acquired knowledge, and considerable intellectual powers. I observed that he occasionally became absent and abstracted during the conversation, and was persuaded that there was something mysterious about him, which I vainly endeavoured to develope.

When approaching to the market town

where he was to stop, he told me, that as he expected some of his people up after him, and had some orders to give them before entering into the town, he would stop here, and wait their arrival. I conjectured that this was delicacy to me, that we might not appear as travelling companions; and although I hardly know any just cause for it, yet I felt obliged by his prudence. "I owe you five guineas," said he at parting; "you have seen how I could have paid you, but conscience would not allow me. Perhaps you expected that, vulture like, I would have swooped upon the prey that spontaneously threw itself into my talons. No, sir! although a player, I trust that I have still some principle—I will yet discharge all my obligations, if life and health are left me,—but when or where!—ay, there's the rub.—Farewell!" I could not help feeling a sentiment of respect, mingled with pity, for talents so misapplied, and for principles so dignified, and at the same time, so degraded in their application. But when I reflected on his argument with the ex-

cise officer, on my own situation, and that of the Edinburgh swindler, I began to pity, where I had often been inclined to blame.

Being impatient to reach home, I took a slight refreshment, and setting out at a smart pace, arrived at my father's house about sunset. We had much to talk of; some time was happily spent in mutual congratulations on finding each other well; and, after a brief outline of my peregrinations, "tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep," hushed our cares in temporary oblivion.

Next morning I learned, with much concern, that the affairs of Smith, my brother-in-law, were still getting into greater confusion; that his ruin was now inevitable; and, what was still worse, that his conduct was become irregular in the extreme. Associating with low and even suspicious characters, he was now an habitual drunkard, seldom at home, and when there, always sulky and in bad humour. He had oftener than once had the brutality to beat his wife, because she would

not borrow more money from her father; the consequence of which was, that she had become quite dispirited, had fallen into bad health, and was not expected to survive long. Her illness increased rapidly, and she died in a few weeks after my return, leaving two children, who were taken home by their grandfather. Such were the consequences of a match, founded neither upon love nor esteem, but patched up, from motives of expediency, to cover a deviation from the paths of prudence and virtue.

My brother-in-law now absconded, and the trifling property he had left was seized by his creditors. I had been taken up with his affairs, and had thought little about doing any thing for myself; but now getting time to reflect, my prospects were sufficiently gloomy. My father was old and infirm, still bound for a very considerable sum on account of his reprobate son-in-law, and also burthened with his two children; my mother scarcely able to leave her bed, and myself doing nothing.

For a considerable time past, a number

of circumstances, some of them of no very ordinary occurrence, had prevented me from the anticipation of future events: they had now ceased to operate, and I looked forward with despondent anxiety.

"The wide, th' unbounded prospect lay before me,
But shadows, clouds, and darkness, *rested* on it."

CHAPTER XIII.

Had my ambitious mind been led to rise
  To highest flights, to crosier, or to pall,
Scarce could I mourn the missing of the prize,
  For soaring wishes well deserve their fall.

PENROSE.

HITHERTO, although I had been unfortunate, my conduct had been such as to merit the approbation of my own conscience; and I could say, with Portius,

" Tis not in mortals to command success,
But I'll do more—deserve it!"

But, on reviewing my conduct impartially, I am compelled to acknowledge, that the time was now approaching, when I could no longer derive consolation from this high sense of honour. When I was licensed to

preach the Gospel, I believed, that zeal and sincerity in my profession, with strict propriety of behaviour, would ultimately procure me a settlement, where my services would be useful, and my life comfortable. Years had now passed away, and I saw myself apparently as far distant as ever from the goal; nay, it seemed very probable, that, without altering the means, I should never attain the end to which I ardently aspired.

About the time that I began to be impressed with this opinion, I happened to meet an old college companion, who had received license to preach two sessions later than I. If my spirits were depressed, his were no less elevated; and after relating the outlines of his history since we parted at the university, he concluded, by shewing me a presentation which he had recently obtained, telling me, at the same time, that he was thus far on his way to visit his intended residence and charge.

I inquired how the people, in so distant a quarter of the country, came to know any

thing of him. He smiled, and told me, that they knew as little of him as he did of them; that the presentation was obtained by the kindness of a gentleman, whose good opinion he had taken some pains to cultivate. I congratulated him upon his success, and attempted to disguise my own feelings, by quoting Goldsmith's observation, that "one man is born with a silver spoon in his mouth, and another with a wooden ladle!" "Nay," said he, "Will, you are wrong: rather say,

> "There is a tide in the affairs of men,
> That, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune."

"Do you suppose, now, that if I had sat still and trusted to Providence, without making any exertion for myself, I should at this moment have been minister of ———, with a stipend of nearly £200 per annum, a snug manse, and a good glebe? No, my dear fellow, this would have been burying my talent in the earth, as you are doing: I have made some occasional inquiries after you, and find that you are either

too proud or too diffident; if you imagine that your merit entitles you to public notice and patronage, and that it will follow as a necessary consequence, I am afraid you will find yourself sadly mistaken. Not that I depreciate your abilities and qualifications; without a compliment, I believe and know them to be much superior to mine, but they are neither known nor cared for by the world. Do you not see, that procuring a living in the church, is like getting a seat at a place of public entertainment, where a crowd is assembled before the doors are opened? If there are more people than seats, a scramble will ensue; every one will seize a place as fast as possible, and if a man is so modest as to stand looking on in expectation that some one will ask him to a comfortable birth, I am afraid he may stand till he is wearied. You may think that I speak with levity, but the thing is true; I want to rouse you from your apathy: reflect upon what I have said; for, believe me, you want energy, and have by far too much of false delicacy."

I must confess, that what he had said left a considerable impression upon my mind, and I sighed to believe that it was too true: but still what could I do? Hitherto, I had accustomed myself to look with a kind of horror upon any sinister means that might be employed in obtaining a charge, aware that the incumbent, at his induction, must publicly declare, "that his sole motive for entering the church is, the glory of God, and the good of souls." But I now began to reflect upon St Paul's assertion, "that he who serves at the altar should live by the altar;" and, as I had spent my youth in qualifying myself for these duties, it appeared right and fit that the church, to which I had devoted my studies and services, should remunerate me for my labour and expenses:—but how or where should I apply to attain my purpose?

While I was brooding over these reflections, a clergyman, at some distance, sent a request that I would officiate for him on the day of the national fast. The principal heritor resided in the parish, and had a liv-

ing in his gift, the incumbent of which was an old man of about eighty years of age. Believing it probable that this heritor would be at church on the fast day, I determined to use every exertion to gain his good opinion; and, having sufficient time for study, composed a discourse in my best manner. My illustrations were clear, and my arguments addressed to the reasoning faculties. In my application, I studied effect, by addressing the passions; the language was chaste, but warm and energetic; and my periods were turned with much attention. I repeated my discourse again and again, and employed every means to fortify myself with the necessary confidence. The day approached; the great man appeared at church, and I entered upon the service. Shall I confess that his presence overawed me?—Since the first time that I had preached in public, never had I wanted moderate confidence till now. My anxiety to excel defeated its purpose—my voice faultered—and, for a few moments, I could not articulate distinctly. I saw him jog his lady's elbow,

and this increased my confusion. I made a momentary pause,—collected all my force of mind—and determined to persevere. The fit wore off; and I felt my confidence increase as I proceeded; the audience was attentive, and I observed the gentleman's eye fixed upon me during the service. Upon the dismissal of the congregation, he received me and the minister of the parish at the church door—shook hands—paid me some very handsome compliments on my discourse—and concluded by inviting us both to dinner. I was afraid lest the minister would refuse, but, to my satisfaction, he accepted the invitation.

In the course of the afternoon, our landlord entered into conversation with me about my studies; asked me how long I had been a preacher; and very politely expressed his wish, that I would publish the sermon which he had just then heard with so much pleasure.

This wish I was very willing to construe into a command; but not knowing exactly what reply I could with propriety make,

I bowed acquiescence, and resolved to comply with the request.

We departed from the splendid mansion, and on Monday I left the manse, impatient to reach home, that I might again revise and correct my sermon; hoping, that the time was now not far distant, when I should reap the fruit of my labours.

For two weeks my attention was solely devoted to this subject; I corrected and altered again and again: such was my caprice, or rather my weakness, that I wrote it over for the third time, before I could satisfy myself with a copy for the press.

Another day and sleepless night were employed in composing a dedication to the gentleman, at whose request this important work was to be ushered into the world. I felt myself much at a loss in this delicate task: I was a stranger to the gentleman's character, humours, and taste—ignorant upon what I could compliment him, without injuring either his character or my own. I was not yet hackneyed in the ways of the world; and

although willing to flatter a little, was a novice in the art, and therefore resolved that my dedication should be such as no gentleman would be ashamed to receive; and none in my situation have cause to blush for having offered.

I took little time to deliberate upon what, perhaps, ought to have been a primary consideration, namely, whether the sale of this discourse was likely to indemnify me for the expense. My former bookseller was employed, and by his advice I threw off only three hundred copies, a few of which were upon fine paper.

No time was lost in procuring a fine copy from the press, which I forwarded to my expected patron, stitched in mazarine blue paper, and gilded on the edges.—I received a very polite letter in return, acknowledging the receipt of my sermon, and enclosing five guineas. I was at a loss whether I should consider this as an earnest of his future friendship, or whether it might not be intended as payment in full for the honour I had done him

In about three months after this, the old clergyman, to whom my fancy had destined me as successor, died; and I was indeed weak enough to imagine it probable that my patron would now remember me. My suspense was, however, not of long duration, for the vacancy was soon filled by a young man only a few months from college, whose sister was house-keeper to a certain lord, who, it was said, had a mortgage over certain lands belonging to the patron.

So ended my present hopes of patronage, but the consequences were yet to follow. My sermon, however it might have pleased in the pulpit, seemed to have no attractions for the public, and might be said to have dropped dead-born from the press; for although one copy had produced five guineas, I was ultimately a loser by the publication. So keenly did I feel this mortification, that I could not bear the sight of a copy in my library; and to this day, I wish never to recollect the text which formed the basis of the discourse.

Although now thrown out, I was not

yet inclined to give up the chase: not that my mind was perfectly reconciled to some of the plans that I now schemed; but I qualified them to myself, with the specious idea that I was not pursuing preferment and filthy lucre, but endeavouring to obtain an opportunity of being useful in the discharge of my duty.

I had occasionally amused myself with writing verses, some of which had been read by a few of my friends, one of whom suggested the probability of now turning this talent to advantage. The gentleman who had represented the county in parliament had died recently, and two rival candidates had started for his seat: they were both popular characters, and the contest was expected to be keen. One of the candidates was possessed of extensive property in the county, but still his success was far from certain. "Suppose now," said my friend, "that you were to compose a short, neat, and spirited, poetical address to the electors, in favour of Mr ****, and get it inserted in the county newspaper. I can have a very

fair opportunity of informing him to whom he is indebted, and you may, if you choose, keep your own secret."

It was not difficult to persuade me; and I was not very solicitous to inquire whether the undertaking was right, as it appeared expedient. The address was therefore written and published, to the satisfaction of the gentleman and his party. Before the day of election, I was waited upon by a freeholder, a friend of the candidate whose cause I had espoused. This gentleman, after complimenting me upon my verses, informed me that Mr ****'s election was now certain; and that a celebrated party of singers from London were to exert their powers, in enlivening the festivities in an election dinner; he had therefore to request, as a particular favour, that I would be so obliging as compose a song suitable to the occasion, which, I might be assured, would be received as a high compliment, and suitably remembered.

My hand was now in, and I believed that it would be egregious folly to mar

my chance of patronage by fastidious delicacy. The song was written, brought forward at the proper time, sung, encored with reiterated applause, and published in the county newspaper, along with the account of the election. It was read and generally talked of as mine. A few liberal minded persons who wished my success, congratulated me on the occasion. Mr **** was fond of popularity; I had introduced some compliments justly applicable to him; and my friends said, that, as he had the power, he would doubtless provide for me.

I had other pretended friends, officious, meddling characters, such as are always to be found in society, whispering every malicious sneer and idle observation. These took the opportunity of informing me, that my present attempt to obtain the patronage of Mr **** had given much offence to many pious Christians, who, till now, had been inclined to believe me to be a man under the influence of religious principles. They looked upon song-writing as a dis-

grace to a minister of the Gospel; and my stooping to curry favour with a man who neither professed its doctrines, nor practised its precepts, was a melancholy proof that I wished to enter the church merely for the loaves and the fishes. These whisperings were far from being pleasant to me; and perhaps I felt them the more keenly, that I had never been fully satisfied of the propriety of courting the patronage of Mr ****, who was a man of no very exemplary conduct.

There was still another class who had not been inattentive to my late procedure. At its head was a young man of considerable intellect, tolerable poetic powers, and an invincible propensity to satire. He first parodied my song, and then produced another poem, termed "The Steeple Hunter." The humour of this parody was broad and coarse; but the satire was poignant. Luckily some passages were profane, and others indelicate; of course it was never allowed to circulate freely; and thus he over-shot his own mark; for had the satire been more chaste, it would

have obtained a more extensive circulation, and been much longer remembered. An officious friend handed me a copy, and thereby promoted the irritation of a mind rankling under disappointment and self-accusation.

Amidst the interruptions of my peace, I still indulged a hope that Mr **** would do something for me; and then I was prepared to say, "Let them laugh that win." Time stole away, and I heard nothing of my patron. The period approached when he was to attend his duty in Parliament, and he had a party of his friends to dine with him in the next market town, previous to his departure. The freeholder, at whose request I had written the song, and who really wished to serve me, sent me a note, requesting me to be in town that day, and he would contrive to procure an interview between me and Mr ****. Although I had no suit to urge, nor any explicit favour to solicit, yet I vainly imagined that a personal interview might forward my interest, and give me a fairer pre-

tence for applying, should any occasion occur, when his influence could be exerted in my favour.

I was sent for in the evening, and introduced to the Member of Parliament, who thanked me for the honour I had done him; adding, that although no poet, he would try his pen to congratulate me, either when I should get a living, or be married; which ever of the two events might first happen. My friend was kind enough to reply for me, saying, that a place in the church was not like his honour's seat in Parliament; it did not depend on a certain number of votes, unless they were sanctioned by the *conge d'elire* of a patron. "Well, well," replied the M. P. "all in good time; I hope Mr Campbell will find one. In the mean time, let us have a bumper to his being moderator of the Church of Scotland!" I bowed my thanks, while the toast went round with loud and reiterated horse laughs. Perhaps it was unfortunate for me, that the wine had circulated so freely before my arrival: some of the company exhibited strong

symptoms of intoxication; and boisterous mirth had, with them all, usurped the place of cheerful hilarity.

Mr ****, who appeared the coolest of the party, oftener than once endeavoured to enter into conversation with me, but was always interrupted by the buffoonery of his associates. I wished to retire, but was entreated and compelled to stay. Bumpers went round, and the effects became more and more conspicuous: profane ribaldry and obscene songs were vociferated, in which I was urged to join. Unwilling to offend, I sat silent and reserved, ashamed of my situation, and displeased with myself. I declined swallowing more wine, and had several times passed the bottle without filling my glass, when, being unluckily observed, a vote of censure was moved, and it was proposed, that I should toss off a *magnum bonum*. My friend interfered in my behalf, saying, that being perhaps unaccustomed to drink freely, I should be excused. The M. P. joined in pleading my apology; upon which a member proposed, as an alternative, that

I should swallow a bumper to a most profane and licentious toast: this was carried with unanimous acclamation, and peremptorily insisted on by the company. I gave a decided refusal, and retired immediately, in no gentle mood, amidst the reiterated shouts of the company. I do not know whether I ever felt more out of humour with the world; it is certain, that I never was so much displeased with myself. Here was not only disappointment, but humiliation; I had courted and expected a patron; instead of which, I was treated with contempt, the more galling, as I was conscious that I had in some degree merited it, by the prostitution of my talents, and the degradation of my charater. I execrated my folly, and conceived myself irrecoverably sunk, not only in the estimation of the world, but in my own. I passed a sleepless night, and arose in the morning with an aching head and heart. Upon taking up my hat, I discovered an obscene sentiment written on the lining, with a correct-

ness, of which I could hardly have supposed any of the company capable; this added to my irritation, as it evinced intended and deliberate insult. I walked out, and paced over the fields with hasty and irregular strides, at war with myself and the world.

I expected that some apology would be sent me; but in this expectation I was again disappointed; and had I not been conscious of being influenced by mercenary motives, I would have accused Mr **** of ingratitude. At last, I endeavoured to console myself with the resolution never again to expose myself to degradation by a mean or mercenary action.

Mr **** has doubtless forgotten me many years ago: even now it would add to my happiness could I forget him; for, at this distance of time, there is no incident of my life that I would so gladly banish from my memory as this.

For some days after this humiliating scene, I was ashamed to appear in public, persuaded that every one who knew me

was indulging himself in mirth at my expense. Unhappily, my prospects, and the state of my father's affairs, had no tendency to sooth my mind; and I began to sink into settled despondency.

CHAPTER XIV.

Old times were changed, old manners gone,
A stranger filled the Stuart's throne.

SCOTT.

Now wae to thee, thou cruel lord,
A bluidy man I trow thou be,
For mony a heart thou hast made sair,
That ne'er did wrang to thine nor thee.

BURNS.

WHILE I was thus brooding over my wayward fortune, I received the following laconic epistle:

"DEAR SIR,—I am not yet hanged, but am indeed banished; when the time of my transportation expires, you shall receive your five guineas with interest, and the sincere thanks of—

"HAMLET, *Prince of Denmark.*"

I now began seriously to reflect upon my rashness, in giving money to a stranger, when I was so soon to need it myself. But still, when I recollected his disinterestedness in refusing £100 with a pretty girl, I could not help admiring the fellow's honour, and respecting his principles; and I became persuaded not only that he had some prospect of emancipating himself from his present situation, but that I should yet know him in one much superior.

Soon after this, a clergyman at no great distance, who had been long infirm, became so ill as to be unable to preach, or perform the other duties of his office; proposals were made to me to officiate as his assistant, and I again took the charge of a congregation. The people now under my care were of more moderate opinions than my former flock, and we became mutually endeared to each other. A sufficient proof of their attachment was exhibited on the death of the incumbent, which happened about two years after I had entered on the charge; for they, on that occasion, almost unanimously joined

in a petition to the heritors, requesting that I might have the presentation to the kirk; at the same time entering into a subscription to pay me for preaching to them, till a legal settlement should take place. The heritors were numerous, and the right of presentation in the Crown; hence my hopes of success were slender; particularly, as few of the heritors were resident in the parish, which had prevented me from forming any acquaintance with them, or securing their interest on the occasion.

While the matter was depending, an incidental circumstance threw me completely into the back ground. Sir Peter Lightfoot had applied to a principal heritor for his interest in procuring the kirk, now vacant, for the young man who had succeeded me in his family. A contested election for the representation of the county, was just then going on: parties were nearly equal; but, when all their inclinations were known, it was discovered that Sir Peter (who had not yet declared himself,) had the casting vote.

The knight, ever true to his principle, did not on this occasion forget interest; and, after duly weighing the court influence of both candidates, made choice of his man; and telling him frankly, that one good turn deserved another, stipulated, that if the kirk of ——— could be secured for a worthy young man, for whom he was anxious to provide, his vote should repay the favour. The candidate, presuming upon his influence, bound himself to procure the living for the tutor at Bramble-brae. Sir Peter's vote was given; the candidate succeeded; and, in short, Sir Peter had the satisfaction of handing the presentation to the young man, who thanked the knight in due terms, and congratulated himself upon a happy deliverance from a charge, of which he was heartily tired.

Considerable opposition was made to the settlement by the parishioners, which had no good tendency either to them or me. My mother was violent on the occasion; and maintained, that it was not only a shame, but a crying sin, for any man, what-

ever his rank or station, to force a minister upon a congregation: "they had a right to choose their own shepherd, and how could they listen to the voice of a stranger, one who came not in at the door, but over the wall as a thief an' a robber! Such men were not shepherds, but shearers of the flock; an' they had muckle to answer for, wha deprived a congregation o' gospel privileges; for it was surely nae privilege to attend a minister wha show'd that he cared na for the affections o' his people, provided he made sure o' the stipend." My mother's disappointment in this affair was, I believe, much greater than mine; and the only relief she now felt was, in thus venting her execrations among the gossips in the neighbourhood. These I was sometimes condemned to hear, as neither advice nor reproof could effectually silence her.

I had no occasion for this addition to my vexation. It was sufficient to be again without employment, unable to provide for myself, much less capable of assisting my

parents, whose situation was now become distressing to me. My father's lease was expired, and he was of too great an age to renew it. The lands were let to another; and we had to remove from the farm in a few months: he was still security for a considerable sum, on account of my worthless brother-in-law, and little indulgence was to be expected from the creditor; every day was adding to our despondency, as the consummation of our misfortunes was approaching. It is the quality of some minds to rise in proportion to their sufferings, and it is certainly a quality much to be desired; but my father's was not of that temperament—nor was mine. I every day felt myself less prepared to meet what seemed inevitable; however, it was necessary to resolve upon something.

It has been already mentioned, that my uncle was much displeased with the incidents that took place at my birth; my mother's refusal to name me Charlie added to his irritation; and the unfortunate appellation of William confirmed his displeasure

into a settled dislike to the whole family, and to me in particular.

The defeat of Charles at Culloden, and the total ruin of a cause to which he had been a staunch well-wisher, although a timid ally, had tinged his mind with a certain degree of misanthropy; he associated with few, and those only of his own principles. With a very limited understanding and strong prejudices, he was entirely unacquainted with the human heart; and there was reason to believe, that he had, oftener than once, been the dupe of those who affected, like him, to deplore the misfortunes of his favourite adventurer. It is certain that his ruling passion was avarice, and this, with a prudent regard to personal safety, prevented him from joining the standard of rebellion; yet, strange as it may appear, he became zealous in the cause after it was lost, when the future success of his hero was nearly as hopeless, as the discovery of the perpetual motion. He had been upbraided for his lukewarm and temporizing conduct, at the period when his wealth

would have been useful; and perhaps he felt the justice of the accusation. Hence, like many others in life, he resolved upon a change of conduct, when it was too late to be of any utility.

Though ignorant, he was not without a certain degree of cunning; and, while he afforded liberal assistance to his favourites, who had suffered for exhibiting the courage that he wanted, he took special care not to render himself amenable to the laws. He had been tolerably successful in the world; and, although much had been extorted from him, by the duplicity of those more cunning than himself, still he was considered rich.

As he was now upwards of seventy years of age, a widower and childless, my mother (who was his only sister, and he had no other near relative,) still indulged the hope that, previous to his death, he would be reconciled to her; and that his property would yet become our own. Of this I entertained great doubts, and every day's experience tended to confirm them.

No friendly intercourse had subsisted between my uncle and our family within my recollection; an occasional interchange of external civilities, was the only acknowledgment of our mutual relationship.

His residence being at a considerable distance from ours, neither party had seen each other for a period of three years from the time of which I am now writing.

Amidst the many deliberations held on the embarrassed state of our affairs, it was suggested by my mother, that my father and I should make a friendly visit to her brother, and in a cautious, but confidential manner, disclose our situation to him; as he was perfectly able, and she was sure would never refuse all that was necessary for our relief. My father affirmed that she was mistaken; and that, by such a visit, we should only expose ourselves to insult. "Na, na," said my mother, "blood's ay thicker* than water! he'll never see you, nor his sister's bairn, disgraced and ruined.—Wi' ae fut in the grave, he'll never think o' keep-

ing up ill will. Forget and forgie! If ye were na as proud as he is, ye wadna ha'e sic a hanker about makin' the trial."

For my own part, I certainly felt great reluctance to make, what I considered a hopeless attempt; besides, as my uncle had always shewn a dislike to me, my delicacy revolted from the measure now proposed. However, my mother's hopes became sanguine in proportion to our aversion; but this was nothing unusual,—opposition to her plans generally having the effect of rendering her more tenacious; as naturalists say, that some trees strike their roots deeper by being well shaken.

To get rid, therefore, of her importunities, more than from any hopes of success, we agreed to make the visit, provided my mother would accompany us; and she having consented, we set out on this mercenary journey. When we came within sight of my uncle's habitation, my mother began to reckon the cattle pasturing in the glen, and the sheep that were nibbling on the hills; requesting me to keep up my heart,

for they would all be mine some day; and that day, she believed, not very distant, for her brother was surely very frail now.

We approached the house, which was rude both in materials and workmanship: the walls were formed entirely of sods, or feal, as they termed them; a small glazed window, opening upon hinges in the best chamber, seemed to be a modern improvement. Upon approaching the door, such a volume of smoke was issuing from it, that we imagined the mansion was on fire. We knocked, and were answered by a bouncing wench, with a bronzed face covered with pimples and freckles, who desired us to come in. On peeping into the kitchen, we saw a quantity of furze, or *whins*, blazing at least three feet above the hearth, and illuminating the whole place.

We were conducted into the ben-house, which was so obscured with smoke, that we could not discover its dimensions, and no r[illegible] was visible to my smarting eyes. I had sat only a short time, when I was made feelingly sensible of its existence; for something con-

tinued to drop at short intervals on my shoulders. Having shifted my position, I now felt that this unknown substance was settling on my head; and putting up my fingers to discover what it was, I found that it was liquid soot. Upon the smoke clearing away a little, I saw that the inside of the roof was as black with it as a ship-carpenter's kettle; and the weather being damp, this salt, assuming a new modification, was pouring in a liquid form from every rafter, and in every corner of this sable mansion.

'My uncle, who was in the field when we arrived, having been sent for, soon made his appearance, both hale and hearty, and with a great flow of spirits and apparent cheerfulness of heart. My mother congratulated him upon his fresh and healthy looks; saying that he was, like the eagles upon his neighbouring mountains, renewing his age; although truth compels me to say, that she looked rather disappointed at his vigorous appearance. He told her, that he never en-

joyed better health in his life, nor was he ever so happy as he had been for these six months past; that he did indeed feel he was renewing his age; and he would now have the pleasure of introducing to us the cause of this happy change. This he did by calling out, "Jacobina!" when in bounced the woman who received us at the door, about whom I thought there were obvious signs of matronship.

"There, sister," said he, "is the gudewife o' Drumscarlie, an' a gude wife indeed she is to me. I followed the example of King David with Abishag; an' find that they never do wrang wha tak the holy men o' Scripture for the pattern o' their conduct."

I saw my mother change colour, and was persuaded she was about to say something very unpleasant; but, being seated next to her, I trod upon her foot in order to suppress the ebullition, which I was afraid of bursting out.

My uncle, after talking of different subjects, at last asked me what kirk I had

got; how long it was since I was placed; and what was the worth of my stipend.

"Dinna mock poor fowk, brither," replied my mother; "although the laddie has na been sae fortunate yet, I hope his time's coming!" "Lord help us a', Mary! is that possible? You're surely jokin', lassie; I thought your gryte friend, the Duke, had provided for William, his name-son, langsyne!"

"Spare your taunts, brither; it's no ilka day that we see ither; we didna come here to ca' quarrels; an' I'm for lettin byganes be byganes."

"D—l thank ye! nae wonder though ye think shame o' that mornin's wark—I'll ne'er forget it; an' wad rather gi'en the best score o sheep that ever I ca'd to the hill, before ane that was a drap's blude to me sud a been a bawbee behaddin to sic a ——"

"Whisht, whisht," said my mother, clapping her hand to his mouth; "I'm tired an' hungry—let's get our supper, an' a drap o' your Ferintosh!"

I was agreeably surprised at my mother's forbearance: my father had kept a prudent silence; and the supper passed with hospitable cheerfulness.

During the first circuit of the glass, which passed to each other's health, my mother pledged our landlady with much coldness and reserve. I saw it was noticed by my uncle, and was afraid of the consequences; for both his language and manner shewed that he had all the uxoriousness which an old man generally possesses for a young wife.

He poured out a second glass, crying, "Jacobina, put round the bottle, and fill your glasses; come now! "Here's awa wi' the uncos!" "Amen," said Jacobina.

I was not ignorant of his meaning, and determined not to pledge him; but, averse from a quarrel, I affected a sudden squeamishness and utter inability to taste more whisky.

"You're a cowardly tyke," cried my uncle;" you dare not take my side, and want courage to defend your ain."

"You wrong me," cried I; "your political attachments, I may, at your age, excuse, but can never approve; although, while here, it is my wish that we should, if possible, not differ about opinions: however, that you may not suppose I have less firmness than yourself, "Here's for King George!" and I tossed off a glass of whisky. "Now," said he, "you are a man, although not to my liking."

My father's placid disposition rendered this scene exceedingly wearisome to him; and he proposed that we should retire for the night, telling my uncle, that we were to set out on our return home, next morning after breakfast. I endeavoured to give the conversation that cheerful turn, which might enable us all to part in good humour; but my uncle still found opportunity, from some association of ideas, to recur to his favourite topic, which it was obvious was more strongly impressed upon his mind by my presence, and the imaginary connexion that he supposed me to have with the house of Brunswick.

Next morning we all got up betimes, and went to view my uncle's fields and flocks. Seated on a hillock of fine blooming heath, he began to expatiate on his wealth and comforts in life; which he said would have been perfect, could he have seen his friends in their own place. From this subject it was next to impossible to divert his attention.

My mother, impatient to introduce what was nearest her heart, now said: "I am very glad, brither, baith for your ain sake an' mine, that Providence has been sae kind to you. We have been very unfortunate, and are just now sair distressed indeed. My gudeman there has a bill comin' due, that he ought to hae had naething to do wi'; but that canna be helped; it was for her sake that's awa now, an' if we were able for our ain turn, it wadna matter; that no being the case, we maun be obliged to somebody. Now, brither, as this is the first favour we ever sought of you, will you either lend us forty pound for a tow-

mont, or be caution for the bill that length o' time, till we see what turns about?"

I observed the old man's eyes kindle; but it was with malignant fire.

"You say," exclaimed he, "ye never sought a favour frae me; I wish I could tell ye the same tale—I sought but ane, an' ye denied me. I havena forgot it, an' never will, while my head's aboon the yird! I sat by your bed-side wi' a sair heart, an' prigget wi' you to ca' that chap Charlie—an' tald ye that it wud be for his advantage;—instead o' gi'eing me that satisfaction, ye gae him the very name that ye kent wad stick longest at my stomach. Ye mith as weel ca'd him, what, for his sake, I winna say; an' now, to be plain wi' you, although I ken he has nae wyte o't, I neither like to see him, nor to hear o' his name. His name-father (L—d forgi'e me that I canna forget him!) left us o'er muckle cause to mind him. Had he ga'en hame frae Culloden, I wad hae allowed him the character of a soger; but to gallop o'er a country wi' a

menzie of red coats, huntin down poor helpless bodies, an' burning their biggins about their lugs—gryte an' sma', the laird an' his cottars;—clans, that could hae counted kin to the yont side o' King Robert the Bruce, slaughtered, or driven frae their hames, without a hole to put their head in, dandering about, strangers an' beggars in an unco' land! The grass is green aboon mony a hearth-stane, round which the bairns cowred that wad hae been fast friends to the house of Hanover—the howlit sits upo' the chimley tap, an' the tod glowrs o'er the black reekit wa's, that were anes the honour o' the north—the withered fern wags i' the ha', where our kilted clans sat wi' the best blood o' the country side i' their veins—mony a Highland heart lies cauld i' the yird, an' mony a fleet fallow was streekit amang the heather, wha never waggit a finger against your king. Was that like a gallant soger? Was that the way to mak' friends?—But, I'm an auld fool, an canna help speakin' my mind."

"Indeed, brither, you're nae less," replied my mother; "if your hot-headed an' rebellious clans hadna begun the brulzie, nane o' that mischief wad hae happened; an' ye ought to hae as muckle sense as ken, that, wharever the seat o' war is, the sakeless [illegible] suffer on baith sides; an' let me tell you, you're enough to keep up the spirit o' rebellion in a country side, for naething else seems to rin i' your noddle."

"Troth, Mary, there's been little except ae subject in my head sin' ye set your snout here. I count it little credit to be o' your kin; and the name that ye've gi'en to that poor sakeless chiel upon the hillock beside ye, is a proof that ye gloried in your shame."

"Weel a weel, brither; ye's never tell me sic a tale again amo' the braes o' Drumscarlie, though we suld baith live to the age of Methusalem. In the meantime, I think the sooner we flit the better—gang awa gudeman, an' draw furth our beasts; I'se no bide here to mak you unhappy." "Please

yoursel', Mary, but I think ye may as weel bide an' get some parritch;—ye've a lang dreigh road afore ye."

So saying, the old man, with tolerable complacency, took hold of my father and me and forced us towards the house. Breakfast over, which was crowned with a glass of aqua vitæ, we took leave of our landlady, who vainly tried to disguise her joy at our departure. When my uncle said that he would accompany us a few miles, as he had business that way, she tried different methods to prevent him. "Ay," said he, "that's aye the way, when I offer to gang frae hame—the poor thing's never happy when I'm out o' her sight. But ye ken, Jacobina, I havena anither sister in the warld, an' we'll maybe never see ither again—stap into the house, I'll no stay ayont dinner time."

On the road my uncle drew me behind, and addressed me thus: "Now laddie, (excuse me, for I canna speak your name, God send I had never heard it!) if I've said ony

thing to gie you offence, either yestreen or this mornin', I'm sorry for't; I've nae faut to find wi' you but your name, an' that's no your ain doin's. I'm wae for your father, and wad help him if it were in my power; but your mither, sister as she's mine, deserves mair than I hope she'll meet wi'. There's twal punds (speaking very low, and pushing it into my hand), put it into your pouch, it will ay be some help, an', tak' my word, if I had haen ony mair, it shou'd a' been at your service; but letna your mither ken it cam frae me; for she deserves naething at my hand; an' if I say ony mair to her afore we part, mind there's naething ettled either at your father or you."

I was about to reply, but he brushed up to my parents, giving me a significant nod. We stopped at a small alehouse on the road, where my uncle was to take leave of us. Here we had some whisky, and at parting, after shaking hands with us all, he wished me good health, and better *moyen* in the world than thae gryte friends of my mo-

ther's choosing. Before rising, my mother said: "Weel brither, now that your blast's blawn, will you, or will you no, help us out o' our present hobble?"

"'Deed sister, although I had mair inclination, prudence wadna let me. An' ye had done as I bade ye, it mith a been a' your ain; I wad hae taen hame Charlie, an' made him my pet; mony lang year's rowed round sin' he wad hae been my companion, an', in that case, I wad never hae needed nor sought anither. But you took your way, an' I've ta'en mine. There's our laird, honest man, lost nearly his a' when the clans raise, an' it took mony good speakers, forby yellow gowd, to get the bit land keepit: I coudna but help *him*. Syne, there's Donald M'Whittie, my neist neighbour ayont the brae, he ca't ae laddie Jamie, an anither Charlie, an' a lass bairn (her that's at my fire-side now), Jacobina: I put a' the three to the school, an' gae them five hunder merks the piece, forby twa-three pet ewes an' twa queys; an' the best thing I could think o' for the

lassie, was to mak' her my ain. Sae ye see I maun now draw in my hand, seeing I've changed my way o' life: she's a kind creature to me, and I'll maybe hae mae to provide for,—at least the lassie's been hinting as muckle; an' ye mind the apostle says, 'he that provideth not for his own house, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.' Therefore, sister, I maun e'en look to mysel', just as ye did wi' the christening o' your laddie. But, dear woman, it's no possible that ye can be in a strait for sic a draigle as forty punds. Send up word to Lon'on; ye'll get help in a clatter amo' your gryte friends. Some mongrel, wi' the ae half o' his coat red and the other black, will come frae the court wi' a gowpin fu' o' gowd t'ye. I needna remind ye, that ye ken the benefit o' thae kind o' cattle lang syne!"

"Come, come," cried my father, unable to suppress his anger, "this is too much, and I will not have my wife insulted to gratify the malignant disposition of any man that ever lived, much less of you, who are an old

doating Jacobite, whose age only protects you from the punishment you deserve: but enough, I have endeavoured to avoid quarrelling, so let us part in peace."

My father had hitherto taken no part in these family wranglings, and the spirit of my uncle seemed cowed before him: he was about to reply, but my father stopt him short, by saying, that he wished no canting, he had heard enough. "Farewell, brither," said my mother, "gang awa hame an' mak' ready the cradle; Jacobina will keep it gawn; an' whan ye gang out at e'en, ye'll may be hear the gowk in the woods o' Drumscarlie, to delight your lugs in a simmer gloaming!" "Shame, shame, Mary!" cried my father. "Lift your mother on the horse, William!" I did so, and they rode off.

Before mounting, I drew my uncle aside, and pushed the money he had given me into his hand, saying, I would take no bribe to see my mother treated so rudely. He seemed affronted, and replied, that I was a hot-headed fool, and did not know the

world; that he was inclined to have been my friend, but I had prevented him.

During our journey homeward very little conversation took place. My father was vexed, and my mother ashamed, at the failure of a scheme devised by herself. Next day all parties seemed, as if by tacit but implied agreement, to make no reference to what was at best a very disagreeable subject.

CHAPTER XV.

Here mark what ills the scholar's life assail;
Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the jail.
JOHNSON.

As the removal of my father's family was to take place in a short time. it became necessary to dispose of the farm-stocking, &c. This being carried into effect, and the amount ascertained, it was found that, including the obligations incurred for Mr Smith, the property was not adequate to the debts. With the exception of the rent and the cautionary obligation above mentioned, my father's debts were very trifling, and there was no reason to apprehend harsh measures from any of his personal creditors. A negotiation was attempted with Smith's

creditor, in the progress of which, my father having disclosed the true state of his affairs, this person, who acted upon the principles of worldly wisdom, conceiving that in my father's present circumstances there was no hope of his affairs getting better, determined therefore to look after his own interest without any unnecessary delay, and accordingly took legal and summary measures against my father. The result of this was, that letters of horning and caption were issued, by virtue of which a *possé* of officers arrived, for the purpose of dragging my father to prison. Leaving some of the village neighbours to take care of my mother, and comfort her, I accompanied my father, with full determination to take his place rather than allow him to linger in confinement, from which I saw little prospect of release.

On our way to the county jail, which was some miles distant, we were met by several acquaintance, some of whom were in affluent circumstances; but, like the priest and the Levite in the gospel, they looked on

us and passed by; while others of the poorer class shook us by the hand, and attempted to administer at least the consolation of hope; which was all they had to bestow. On approaching the door of the room where my father was to be immured, the jailer uttered an ejaculation of pity, accompanied even with tears, and earnestly exclaimed, "Oh that Miss Burton were here again!" It now flashed upon my mind, that it must have been to her that I was formerly indebted for my release from prison. I had never known my benefactor on that occasion; but, recollecting the sly insinuations used by the jailer at that time, I had now no doubt upon the subject. The conviction of this, my feelings for a father in prison, and the dreary prospect that lay before us, magnified by my gloomy and despondent imagination, quite unmanned me; and, had it not been for my father's presence, I would have blubbered like a child.

My heart was agitated, and my mind unsettled by the operation of opposite thoughts and feelings. Prudence seemed to accuse me

for the refusal of Miss Burton's hand; and gratitude whispered, that I had incurred so large a debt to that lady, that it could not be otherwise discharged—I looked at my father, and the settled melancholy of his countenance agonized my soul—I withdrew to a corner of the room, and clasping my hands, mentally exclaimed: "Why did I ever leave the plough? Oh, that I had been taught to earn my bread by the sweat of my brow! Why did I ever see and love Maria B.? had I not known her, I might have married Miss Burton, and saved my father from this misery."

Strange as it may appear, no sooner had my mind rested on Maria B., whose sainted spirit seems, on this as on many other trying occasions, to have watched over me as a guardian angel, than its perturbation ceased, and with calm composure I set about arranging the cell for our nightly repose.

I began this work with a tranquillity of mind, to which I had for a considerable time past been a stranger; when the thought

of my mother's situation again disturbed the serenity of my soul.

The sun was nearly setting, and his parting beams, passing through our grated window, fell upon a parcel of straw in the opposite corner of the room; the situation of which indicated that it had been the couch of the last tenant in this "house of care." It was only now that I reflected upon our wants and privations; my previous ideas had been engrossed with a general view of confinement and disgrace; but I now began to analyze the matter, and reduce our situation to its constituent horrors. The first and most obvious was the want of proper bedding.. While I was meditating how this want could be supplied, or what substitute might be contrived, the keeper introduced one of our neighbours with a burden of bed-clothes and a mattress. To satisfy me about my mother, he mentioned that they had been made up and despatched by her; that she was in as good spirits as could be expected; that he and some others were

doing their best to console her; and, shaking my father's hand, he concluded by bidding him hope for the best, as there was little doubt but means would soon be contrived for his liberation. The tear trembled in my father's eye, and I beheld its brother in that of this friendly rustic, who departed casting a "lingering melancholy look behind." A few minutes had only elapsed, when the jailer handed me the following letter:

"Dear Sir,—My exile is finished; I shall see you in half an hour. Do not leave your father till you introduce him to

"HAMLET, *Prince of Denmark.*"

Here were fresh materials for surprise; my brain turned round in a kind of giddy whirl; I hoped I knew not what: again my fears predominated, lest these baseless and visionary hopes might end in disappointment. I had long indulged the idea that my theatrical friend was not what he appeared, and still flattered myself that I should, at some period, know him in another and more respectable character. It required only a little romantic hope, after what

had just happened, to conclude that the time was come; but I felt my mind so agitated, that the half hour seemed to me more than tripled, and I believe a week of such suspense would have been insupportable.

Within the time specified, my friend came up, with a step light and swift as Mercury. He grasped my hand, and I thought wiped a tear from his eye. Then seizing my father's hand, he addressed him in a cheerful tone: "Come, my good old man," said he, "this is no place for one of your years; I want your company a little; let that youngster take your situation in the mean time." My father hesitated without replying, hardly understanding his meaning. "Well then," continued he, "as you seem so reluctant to separate, come along both of you;" And, seizing an arm of each, cried, "Jailer, open the door."

All this was the work of an instant; and before either of us could recover from our astonishment, we were on the High Street, linked in the player's arms. It was twilight, and the citizens were enjoying

their evening promenade; our egress had been observed, and we became objects of general notice. "Come," said the player, let us avoid greetings in the market-place;" and he led us across the street to the principal inn. After being seated, "I find you are surprised," said he; "be satisfied, my venerable friend, you are free!" "Who are you? What stranger would do so much for a poor old man?" cried my father. "This is no place for long explanations,—we must have a glass of wine and something to eat, as I presume you are anxious to be at your own fire-side."

The vicissitudes of the day had destroyed our appetite, and our minds were too much agitated for enjoying the pleasures of the table.

The player, observing my face of inquiring wonder at his metamorphosis, said, "My dear friend, I find you are rather at a loss what to make of me—I have often been at that pitch with myself; you have some acquaintance of me as a strolling player, but you know that 'man in his life

plays many parts;'—I have shifted the scene, and can now say, 'Othello's occupation's gone!' My history is too long to be detailed at this meeting, but you shall have it at some future period. Suffice it to say, that just now I am no longer Alexander the Great, or Hamlet Prince of Denmark, but reduced to plain Jack Belfield, — by the courtesy of the country, Squire Belfield of Hawthorn-lodge, where I expect soon to have the pleasure of seeing you. Meantime let us finish our repast, and—*exeunt omnes.*"

After a few glasses of wine, he ordered a post-chaise, telling us that he meant to have the pleasure of accompanying us home, and to return in the chaise. We drove off, my father being so oppressed with his different feelings that he could scarcely speak.

During the journey, Mr Belfield told us he arrived in the forenoon on horse-back, attended by a servant; that he happened to see the crowd as we went into prison, but hearing that it was a man for debt, paid no further attention to the mat-

ter till late in the afternoon, when he overheard one say to another on the street, that if all he was worth could relieve the minister's father from prison, he should not lie there. Prompted by this exhibition of rustic benevolence, on a more particular inquiry he learned my name, and lost no time in procuring our liberation. He kindly added, that although he was sorry that my father's feelings and mine should have met with such a shock, yet he was heartily glad it had been in his power to prove his gratitude, by the discharge of a debt which he had never forgotten. Twilight was not yet gone, and the night was fine, so we drove on at a good rate, and soon reached home, followed by several people of the village. My mother came creeping out on hearing the chaise stop; but only seeing Mr Belfield step out, was turning round with the bitterness of disappointed hope, when he handed out my father, and in a moment she had us both in her arms. My father was obliged to stand and receive the congratulations of his neighbours, which

even the presence of Mr Belfield could not suppress.

What passed after entering the house, may be more easily imagined than described. My father presented Mr Belfield as his deliverer, who bade my mother thank her son, as the whole was owing to him. Here the good old woman's ruling passion broke forth: "Ay, ay, I always thought that my Willie wad be an honour and a blessing to his parents!" Mr Belfield paid some compliments to my character, which produced a reply from her that I heard with much pain, and do not now choose to repeat. The horses had been ordered from the chaise, as Mr Belfield said he would stay and chat a little, for although he went late to bed, he was sure to sleep soundly. He then said that he had no wish to inquire into family affairs from idle curiosity; but, as the circumstances which had given him the pleasure of this interview too plainly indicated that we were under embarrassments, perhaps he might be of some use to us, by advice, or any other

way within his power, "which," said he kindly, "I am afraid may not be equal to my inclination." We laid the full state before him; and on examining the debts, he remarked that one, to which he pointed, was paid. "No," said my father, "you are only become my creditor instead of another." "Very well, be it so; as you are an obstinate old fellow, I shall draw out a bill for you to sign immediately." "Have you got a stamp?" said my father. "Pshaw!" replied Mr Belfield, "stamps will be unknown when this bill falls due. Let me have my own way; and recollect, Sir, (addressing me,) you have already known me a prince, what if I should yet be an emperor?" He wrote as under:

"£500 Sterling.

"*September 24th*, 17—.

"Nine hundred and ninety-nine years after date, pay to me, or order, five hundred pounds Sterling, value in account with

HAMLET, *Prince of Denmark*.

He handed this to my father for acceptance, and, with much gravity of countenance, insisted upon having his signature, then, putting the bill in his pocket, bade him settle with his other creditors, for which he thought the funds were sufficient; but, added he, you have as yet only your freedom, for a proof that the debt is cancelled with the original creditor. In fact, I am yet only your bail; as I was in too great a hurry to get you out of the house with the grated windows, to stop for the adjustment of things in form; however, the vouchers shall be forwarded to you. I must now think of returning. As I go to-morrow, perhaps to a considerable distance, I shall probably return this way in about ten days hence, when I hope to have the pleasure of your company (addressing me), at least for one day, at the inn we left. Keep at home about that time, and expect notice of my arrival. By the bye," said he, "I had almost forgot my own debt to *you;* here are your five guineas with thanks." When I declined taking them; "Come,

come, no fooling," said he; "I see your reasons, which are nugatory; I have advanced a trifle for your father, 'tis true, but I find him a good worthy man, and have taken his bill for the payment; take your money, or renounce my friendship,—just which you please." "Your friendship, Sir, I hope ever to preserve." "Well, well then, take your own;" he dropt it into my hand, which he shook heartily, and performing the same act of valedictory kindness to my father, cried "Farewell!" vaulted into the chaise, and drove off.

Although none of us were inclined to sleep, yet the fatigues of the day prompted us to retire to rest. Next morning we were up betimes, and a considerable portion of it was wasted in talking over the mysterious incident of the preceding day. I had to satisfy the curiosity of my parents concerning my acquaintance with a character so unlike any thing they had ever witnessed in their species; for sometimes they took him for an angel, and at other times were apt to imagine him a madman. I ex-

plained these apparent inconsistencies, as far as I was able, by a brief outline of my short acquaintance with Mr Belfield; and expressed my belief, that, as a country gentleman, he would be a benefit and ornament to society.

My father lost no time in arranging his affairs; the bill for which he had been imprisoned was sent to him next day under cover; and as his other creditors found that the funds were now amply sufficient for their claims, they had no hesitation in agreeing to wait till the bills for the sale of his farm-stocking became due. We had now a residence to provide, but having still some months to remain, we were in no great haste, as, to use a phrase of my mother's, I thought something might turn out.

Mr Belfield came at the time he proposed, and sent his servant with a horse to convey me to him: duty as well as inclination prompted the visit, and I met him with sincere pleasure.

In the course of our conversation, he observed that I was doubtless anxious to

know more of a character, which must have appeared to me so very inconsistent. "The present, said he, seems a fit opportunity to afford you the necessary information; therefore, take the following sketch, which I drew up since I saw you; and whatever may be its defects, I assure you, it has the merit of being a faithful and unvarnished narrative. I have some little business, which will engage me in another quarter of the town till you have finished the perusal. He then left me, and I hastened to read the following narrative.

CHAPTER XVI.

I can counterfeit the deep tragedian,
Speak and look back, and pry on every side,
Tremble and start at wagging of a straw:
——————————— ghastly looks
Are at my service like enforced smiles;
And both are ready in their offices
At any time, to grace my stratagems.
SHAKSPEARE.

MY father was proprietor of the small estate which I now occupy. I was his only child; my mother expired in giving me birth; an old maiden sister of my father's took the charge of his household; a nurse was taken in for little Jack, who, in spite of pampering and every species of mistaken kindness, got on amazingly. By the time that I was three years of age, I could curse

the servants, ride upon the house-dog, pull my father's wig, and toss my aunt's family receipt-book into the fire.

My father had been bred a true country squire: his gun, dog, and a few jolly companions over a bottle after dinner, constituted his amusements; but during the deep storms in winter, when intercourse with his neighbours was less frequent, he became the prey of *ennui*, which degenerated into discontent. No associate was then to be had, except the clergyman of the parish, and few congenial traits existed in their characters. The parson was fond of the belles lettres, and my father hated reading of every kind except a newspaper. The minister dined with him at least once a week, and in complaisance would sometimes take a hit at backgammon; but, having no great relish for the game, he played badly, and would sometimes so far forget himself as to quote Horace when he should have been rattling the dice-box. When he was gammoned, which was pretty often the case, a quotation from Shakspeare was

his consolation and apology; my father would then lay aside the board, and insist upon a fresh application to the bottle. To evade this, the parson sometimes endeavoured to fix my father's attention to some of that sublime bard's most animated pieces; but he generally fell asleep at the end of the second act, or, at latest, during the third.

Wearisome as reading was to him, he had penetration enough to discover, that it was a never failing resource to those who could relish it: he therefore determined that I should be a scholar; were it for nothing else, he said, than to keep me from drunken companions, or dying of mere listlessness, as he was in danger of doing for some months every year. In the important affair of making me a scholar, the clergyman was my father's chief counsellor and adviser. He recommended a famous teacher in the nearest market town, who took boarders; and thither I was sent in my sixth year, having just learned my letters.

This teacher merited the character he had acquired. I staid with him till turned

of fourteen; at which period I was a good English and Latin scholar, wrote a fair hand, and had a competent knowledge of numbers. Considerable pains had also been taken to improve my heart. The immutable laws of justice and humanity were inculcated by precept, and illustrated by example. Our teacher also applied himself, with great assiduity, to eradicate the prejudices which his pupils had acquired in the nursery; and there was not a boy at school who feared either ghost or hobgoblin.

I was now reported fit for the university; but as for many years past my father had seen me only during the vacations, he wished me to spend some time with him at home. He was delighted with my scholarship, and gave me a fine young hunter to ride during my stay. This was a very agreeable present to me; and at the expense of several falls, none of which seriously injured me, I became an accomplished equestrian, and could leap a fence, or clear a five-barred gate, with any fox-hunter in the county. So far all was well;

but my father committed one great error during my residence at home. I sat at table with him and his Bacchanalian companions, an auditor of conversations which ought to have been banished from polite company, and were, at any rate, exceedingly improper for a boy of my years.

I went to college, where I continued three years, studying logic, mathematics, natural and moral philosophy, and the other branches which constitute a liberal education. By this time I had become an adept in the art and practice of spending money; my drafts upon my father were so frequent, and for such sums, that he began seriously to remonstrate, and ultimately became angry with me. The session was nearly closed, but I had yet debts to a considerable amount, which I was now afraid to acknowledge to my father; and the thought of seeing him was agony.

Displeased with myself, and convinced that I had played the part of the prodigal son, I formed rather a strange resolution. On the very day that the session ended, I sat down, and wrote a penitential letter to my father,

acknowledging my errors, and declaring my resolutions of amendment: I enclosed a list of all my debts, including a draft for twenty pounds which I had cashed that day; begged of him, for his own honour and mine, to pay the whole; and, thanking him for all his goodness, added, that I was to set out upon my travels; that the above twenty pounds was all my stock of cash; that I should earn what I wanted; requesting him not to expect to see me till I had cancelled my debts, calculating at my annual rate of allowance; and concluding, by assuring him that I should do nothing dishonest or dishonourable, bade him farewell!

The stage appeared my first resource; I had perhaps too frequently attended the theatre; was an idolater of Shakspeare, and could spout tolerably. I changed my name -posted to a distant part of the country—joined a strolling company—procured an engagement—and got on just as strollers usually do; sometimes lived well, and pretty frequently half starved.

The company to which I belonged

broke up at Dover, and a whim struck me that I would see France. I spoke the language with some fluency, and believed that in a land of levity and frivolity, I could be in no danger of starving. Afraid of being known at Calais by some of my countrymen, I pushed for the interior, and engaged myself as clown to a troop of equestrian performers.—I was agile and full of humour; my efforts always commanded a laugh; our success was beyond our most sanguine expectations, and the master raised my salary in proportion, so that I now began to save money. Our master was less economical, got into debt, and ultimately into jail; hence the troop was dissolved.

A young fellow belonging to this broken-up corps, being, like myself, out of employment, proposed that we should set up as mountebanks. He was to be the Doctor, and I was to perform Scaramouch, or Merry Andrew. This did not succeed quite so well: I was not sufficiently acquainted with the provincial idiom and local phrases of the language, and my efforts often failed

in producing the necessary degree of good humour, which is indicated by the broad grins of the rabble. We shifted quarters, and exchanged situations.—It was then that we performed wonders, not one of the least of which was, that, unlike most of my countrymen who visit France, I returned to England, richer by fifty louis than when I left the white cliffs of Dover.

How degrading soever the appearance I had now assumed, my habits of life were rigorously virtuous, in so far as the government of the passions was concerned: I was abstemious in eating and drinking; and as to other indulgencies, I knew them only by recollection, and now heard them talked of as seldom as possible. Finding this rambling way of life more agreeable than I had expected, I began to be afraid that the habit might not be so easily shaken off when prudence rendered it expedient; and therefore, that my attachment to home might not be altogether destroyed, I formed the design of visiting my father *incognito*. For this purpose I disguised myself like an Ita-

lian, and purchased a few prints, pocket-teles-copes, and barometers, with which I travelled through England. When within about twenty miles of my paternal home, I happened to meet a Savoyard, who had a rarèe show, an ape, and some dancing dogs. I soon made an agreement with him for his ape and dogs; and, after staying a day or two in his company, that he might teach me how to manage them, set out for my father's with my retinue, and an old violin under my coat.

I contrived to reach Hawthorn-lodge before the usual hour of dinner, and took my station at the gate, just as he was approaching with a few of his old companions. His hale appearance afforded me great pleasure; and, to hide my feelings, I began to address the company in a strange lingo of French and broken English, concerning the wonderful powers of my ape, which, I said, knew all secrets, past, present, and to come. I was sent to the kitchen till dinner was over, when they said my brutes should have the honour of exhibiting. Had not my metamorphosis been complete,

I would have been afraid of discovery here; but after having amused the servants with my dogs and ape, I took some refreshment, and kept their attention fixed on my domestics rather than myself, till I was ordered into the dining-room.

There it required some little exertion to command my feelings; but my auditors, or spectators (for they were both), were not possessed of very refined sentiments, and my confusion escaped observation. After my dogs had performed some reels, cotillons, &c., during which I amused the company with much outlandish jargon, they wished some specimens of the boasted powers of my monkey. Knowing them all, and many little anecdotes concerning them, it was quite easy to excite their wonder and fix their credulity.

One boisterous fellow came up and pinched pug's ear, upon which it chattered in my face. "What says your imp?" cried he.

"Vy sare, mine ape do say, dat vous kiss de girl vid de rouge hair—dat vous play de carte on Saturday nuit, and sleep a de

shorsh on Sunday. He do say dat vous make de girl vid de rouge hair drink du vin —dat she do box votre tete, and dat dere be mush brulement à de matin." These were facts notorious to the company, and the roar of laughter went round at his expense.

In the same manner, I told every one of them some trait of their character, tickling their favourite hobbies, and exciting every one's laugh at the foibles of his neighbour, till they pronounced that either my monkey or myself was the devil. At last my father asked what I could say to him. Solicitous to know whether he had renounced all paternal feeling, I bade him ask my friend, the ape, any question that he was anxious to have answered, and then judge of its powers.

The following colloquy then took place:

"What family have I?"

"Von son."

"What age?"

"About dix neuf."

"What do you say? I do not understand you."

"About nineteen."

"Is he at home just now?

"Non."

"Where is he?"

"He be seeing de vorld."

I drew him aside, and whispered, "Me could tell a vous about votre son, but voud no like the compagne to understand." The good old man led me into another room. "Speak now," cried he impatiently.

"Votre son did play de prodigal—he be now doing de penance—far—far a distance—he be in bon health, but much poor. sans monies!"

"Can you tell me when I shall see him?"

"Let me see—it vill yet be two vinter, dat he come back un sober vel behave gentilhomme."

"Can you tell me where I may write to him?"

I pinched pug, which, chattering in my ear, I answered, "Non."

"Are you sure I shall again see him?"

"Oui, oui! Jack vill come back, and

shake de hands vid you dus ;" and I shook my father's hand, till my nerves tingled. We now joined the company, and I was offered lodgings for the night, which, for obvious reasons, I declined. Being about to depart, proposals were made to purchase my ape, which I appeared very reluctant to sell, saying: "He be my life, mine appui !" "What would I take for him?" "Fifty guinea." "We will give you a guinea each." (There were ten in company,) I shook my head, "Non, non." "Come," said my father, "I will make mine five, for his intelligence; let us have him." I seemed to hesitate, and at last said: "Vous be tous bons gentilhommes, me vill oblige vous !" The money was paid down; I made the bow of a French frisseur, saying: "Je vous remercie, Messieurs; Je suis votre tres humble serviteur !" and off I came.

Tracing back my steps, I found the Savoyard, resold my dogs to him, changed my dress, and set out for another quarter of the kingdom. I here joined a company of strollers, and performed a short time with success,

when the manager made a sudden exit from the stage of life, leaving a widow and four children, with no other property than the theatrical apparatus. Partly in frolic, and partly from pity, I purchased the whole, which absorbed nearly all my little capital.

I had now undertaken an arduous task, and exertion was necessary. Whoever imagines that the manager of a theatrical company (whether licensed or strolling), has an easy and idle life, is grossly mistaken. I remodelled my company, discharging some and enlisting others, and had performed only about three months, when I met you at ——— : the particulars of which it is unnecessary to relate. You were not then aware that I had seen you before, and was very anxious to get acquainted with you; the *when*, *where*, and *why*, you shall have at another time. I presume you have not forgotten my adventure with the innkeeper's daughter; I felt really uneasy for the girl, particularly as I was the innocent cause of her deviation from female prudence. After parting with you in the vi-

cinity of ——, while I sat by the side of the wood where you left me, a thought occurred, which I next day carried into execution. Dressing myself like a female beggar, with a false beard, I assumed the appearance of a poor old woman of eighty; returned to the village of ——; stopped at the innkeeper's; got some whisky to secure my reception in the kitchen, and began to tell fortunes. My late residence there made me acquainted with circumstances sufficient to establish my credit; and, while busy in unfolding the decrees of fate, I observed that Mary was listening in a thoughtful attitude. As she had been kind enough to give me a little broth, I offered to read her fortune for nothing. I then whispered to her that she was beloved by a farmer, whose name began with a B.; that she once loved him, but had changed her mind, and would have run away with a vagabond who had too many wives already; that none knew this as yet, except another and myself; but should the farmer hear of it, she would lose him for ever; that I saw so far into futurity,

as to know that if he were encouraged at their next interview, he would marry her immediately, and they would have six children; but if that opportunity were lost, it was decreed that she should die an old maid. It required only a little address to get introduced to the farmer, and by pointing plainly to him where his affections were placed—raising up an imaginary rival to him, and pressing despatch, I completely succeeded; and the parties were married a few weeks after.

Want of success obliged us to leave —— about the time I should have paid you the five guineas, and I resolved upon a trip to Ireland. We performed there, in different places, for about a year, and, upon the whole, with more advantage to our finances than we had hitherto experienced. The Irish, where they have no particular cause of dislike or resentment, are benevolent and good-natured, willing to be pleased, and ready to oblige. I could have travelled from one end of the island to the other, and keeping clear of the large towns, where trade had

produced independence and selfishness, it would not have cost me a farthing, provided I could have been satisfied with their simple fare, and rustic accommodation.

Being now almost tired of a trade, the novelty of which was past, and hoping that my father would be easily reconciled to me, I prevailed upon one of the company to purchase the stock in trade, and set up for himself.—When the bargain was closed, and the money paid, I treated the corps dramatique with a supper, presented each of the performers with half-a-guinea; and to Roger, as a favourite, I left a more valuable mark of my esteem.—We kept it up till "witching time of night," when I bade farewell to the stage, and to the green hills of Erin.

Having now a presentiment, for which I could not account, that something was wrong with my father, I wrote to my friend the clergyman, expressing my intention of coming home soon; but, in the meantime, stating my strange uneasiness to hear of my father, begging him to write me in course,

and requesting that his knowledge of me might be kept secret till I chose to appear.

I ought to have mentioned, that my aunt had died before I left the university, and that my father's house-keeper was now an old maid about forty, who had previously been in the service of some of his brother sportsmen.

The clergyman was regular in his reply, saying, that my father was well; but adding the alarming intelligence, that there was great reason to believe he intended to marry his house-keeper, a woman who was no better than she should be; that it was notorious to every body but my father, that she had her young paramours, and wished to marry him only for the sake of a good settlement. He assured me that my secret should be kept; but begged me to return home, and, if possible, prevent so preposterous a match.

This was indeed an impending storm, and threatened serious consequences to me without the prospect of any real comfort to my father. Had I been convinced that the union was to add to his hap-

piness, it should have met with no opposition on my part; but, from the character of the lady, I determined to prevent it by every means in my power.

Although at a loss how to act, I set out for home, trusting that I should be able to form a plan on my journey; and after much cogitation, my fancy hit upon a scheme which appeared plausible. I knew my father to be very superstitious, and consequently credulous; if his house-keeper were nearly as much so, there was a fair chance of success; at any rate, with my knowledge of circumstances, aided by what I might yet collect, my hopes were sanguine.

Upon my arrival at the nearest market-town to Hawthorn-lodge, I dressed myself in a foreign and antique habit, which I had brought along with me; clapped on a false white beard; and wrapping myself in a long black cloak, I travelled all night, and reached the manse just as the minister was going out for his morning walk. He soon recognized me, and, after a sincere welcome, confirmed his former communica-

tion; adding, that my father had obliquely hinted his intentions to him; that it was now become a subject of public talk; and that every body pitied my father, who, it was too evident, was the dupe of a base designing strumpet. She had been kept by more than one in her youthful bloom, and it was believed that, at present, she had an intrigue with a young man, the *grieve*, or superintendent of my father's farm. I trembled with agony at seeing my father on the verge of ruin—to be made ridiculous as a man, and his property plundered by miscreants; for I had no doubt that they were to participate in the spoil. I learned her paramour's name, and even the time and place where they had been very lately, but privately, seen together.

I then told my friendly clergyman that I had a scheme which seemed to have a fair chance of success, but I did not wish to make him a party, although I had no doubt that he would approve of it after its execution.

Perhaps he formed a reasonable conjecture concerning my plan, for he instantly said, I should lose no time in carrying it into effect; and requested to see me immediately after, that I might communicate my success. I left the manse; and, by keeping secret paths in the woods, reached the immediate vicinity of the Lodge without observation, concealing myself in a copse till the proper time for appearing. I saw my father walk out, and immediately proceeded to the kitchen, where, by a little dexterity, I soon convinced the maids that I knew every thing. Pretending to be taken ill, the house-keeper was brought, and I, while supposed to be in a swoon, heard the maids give a most exaggerated account of my necromantic powers.

When I recovered, I took care to address madam in such a way as would awaken her curiosity. Pretending much humanity for me, she conducted me to her own room; where, after treating me with a glass of wine, she began to speak most contemptuously about my foreknowledge, and even

to accuse me of impiety for the pretension. Seeing that this was all affectation, and that she was quite anxious to consult me concerning the decrees of fate, I addressed her thus: "Madam, you may scoff at my powers, but if you had consulted me fifteen years ago, I could have made you a Captain's lady, and ten years ago, madam, had you met me, you would have been Mrs H." She changed colour; said I was a strange man; and, she feared, was not in my right senses. "Some people," said I, "who think themselves very wise, seem to have taken leave of their senses without knowing it." "Who or what are you?" said she. I replied, "Madam, if you will meet me among the birches at the back of the garden, as you did the *grieve* of this estate on Sunday night last at ten o'clock, I will then tell you who I am, and much more that it is of importance for you to know." I now had her completely in my power: she fell into an ague fit; said I was a most extraordinary being; and begged of me to keep her secret;

for she must confess that her character was in my hands. With a contemptuous grin, I told her that more than character, her life was in my keeping. She uttered a shriek, and exclaimed, "will you murder me?" "No," said I, "far be it from me to hurt you; but it depends upon me, whether you shall live nine months, or forty years." In a faultering voice, she begged me to explain. "Well," said I, "you propose marrying a man whom you do not love; and you have a most sincere affection for a man, to whom you have given the strongest pledge of your love, and yet you do not intend to marry him. Is it not so?" "Proceed," was the only reply. "Well then, if you match according to your present intentions, you shall die in labour of your first child, in less than nine months: If you marry the man you love, he will get rich in his place; you shall have seven children to him; and then marry another, not more than half your own age, and as rich as the Captain, who deserted you for an East India fortune."

During this prophecy, she turned red and

white alternately, and, I saw, gave implicit credence to my predictions. Blushing and curtsying, she thanked me; urged me to another glass of wine and some biscuit; hoped I would not speak of her to the servants or neighbours; and insisted upon seeing me out of the gate, under pretence that the house-dog might attack me from my outlandish dress. "Dog!" said I contemptuously; "the hungry wolf, the roaring lion, and nameless monsters of the foaming deep, crawl round my feet, and kiss my hands." This gasconade clenched the whole, and I strode away with a majestic air.

My next object was to see my father. I therefore walked on to that quarter of the wood, where I expected to find him. In a short time I saw him at a distance, and took care to meet him in a deep glen, where the shrubbery might screen us from observation. My dress and figure might have startled wiser heads than his happened to be. I started from the thicket; stood before him; and, with a hollow sonorous voice and most solemn accent, said:

"The departed spirit of your beloved Isabella, who, twenty years ago, gave you a son, and, just as the clock struck the hour of midnight, died in your arms, now sends you her blessing." My appearance, and the solemnity of this address, startled him, and he exclaimed: "In the name of God, who or what are you?" "That is known to myself, and those who sent me." "What do you want with me?" "I have no wants —no earthly feelings.—When your great-grandfather was born, I was then such as I now am; I turned aside the sword that smote his left cheek in Germany; I quenched the fire that had begun to devour the residence you now inhabit; I rode upon the thunder that rolled over your head, and startled your horse, when you sallied forth to join the Pretender's standard,—by breaking your limb, I saved your head from the scaffold; I scattered the thick cloud that darkened the chapel, when you were to be married; and I lighted up the sunbeam that shone so mildly, as you

put the ring on the finger of your Isabella. I watched your prodigal son at the university, and have continued unseen to hover around his steps; I have witnessed the privations he has endured, and the hardships he has encountered; and I have triumphed in his sincere penitence."

"O speak of him," cried my father. "Where is he? when shall I see him?" "It depends upon yourself whether you shall ever see him in this world, or meet him, for the first time, in those mansions where his mother resides."

"Explain—what do you mean?"

"Behold this ring—Do you know it?"

"It was my Isabella's."

"To whom did you give it?"

"To my son—where and how came it into your hands?"

"I snatched it from his bosom, while he dreamed of his mother and you. Here, take it!—put it on the finger of her you are about to marry: let it be the pledge of an union of hands, but not of hearts! Yes, thou

art to marry—thy days shall be without joy; and thy sorrows shall end only with thy life! —She who has lured thee to her arms has already deceived many, and is now deceiving you! She will bring forth children, but not thine; and yet thou must permit them to call thee "father." That lovely mansion, these lofty trees, and fruitful lands, shall become the inheritance of her unhallowed bastards; for the day that thou marriest Rachel, thy son John departs for an unknown country, to return no more—Such are the decrees of fate!"

I had turned to leave him; he seized me by the black flowing mantle, and exclaimed: "Mysterious Being! restore me my son, and I will die contented in his arms. Carry back the ring to him; never shall the pledge of my first love encircle the finger of—a stranger —Will you not speak comfort to a father?"
" I have already said—every thing else depends upon yourself. You are a free agent. Fate does not determine your actions, although it fixes their consequences, Farewell, and remember John!"

I now suddenly darted into another path, and concealing myself in a thicket, watched his steps, and saw him proceed slowly, and apparently very thoughtfully, homeward. Lurking here till dark, I put off my disguise, returned to the market-town, wrote to the parson, appointing a meeting at a still greater distance from home; but requesting him to see my father in the interval. All this was effected; my father hinted to the clergyman, that something uncommon had taken possession of his mind, and that he was persuaded I was either dead or would return soon.

A letter was then prepared by me, addressed to the minister, as if from a distance, inquiring most kindly after my father, and saying that I had dreamed of his marriage; in which case I was to banish myself forever, rather than be a witness of the disgrace that my dream had represented him as bringing upon himself. My good friend smiled, and said this was indeed a pious fraud; but he would reconcile his conscience to it, because the intention was good. The letter

was shewn to my father; he read it with a kind of horror; begged the clergyman to write, pressing my immediate return, and with this assurance, that he had no design of marrying.

In due time a letter was forwarded to my father, announcing my intended return; and, some days after, I arrived in *propria persona.*

My reception was all that I could wish, and we were promising ourselves years of mutual happiness, when my father rode out to the chase, of which he was still fond; but in leaping a drain, the horse, by some accident, came down, rolled over his unfortunate rider, and bruised him so severely that he died in a few days. I was within a week of being of age when this melancholy event happened, and my father had intended giving a feast upon the occasion; so short is the passage from the chambers of mirth to the house of mourning.

The last duties paid to my father, I arranged my establishment; dismissing the house-keeper, and giving the grieve warning to leave my service. During the short time

that intervened, between my return and the death of my father, I had been inquiring after you, and the result was, a determination to see you. I was on a journey to a small estate at a distance, when the circumstance happened that brought us together.

Such, my dear Sir, is the outline of a life, which may have in some degree excited your curiosity. If my company can be as agreeable to you, as yours has been to me during our short interviews, I hope we shall become intimate friends.

I know there is some eccentricity in my character, but neither malignity nor guile in my heart. Most sincerely wishing to be of use to you, I am afraid too little is in my power. Possessed of a competency, I have firmly resolved never to solicit a favour from any one above my own station, and never, directly or indirectly, to have any thing to do with politics. Although I knew that my application to a patron could procure you a kirk, I would allow you one hundred pounds a year from my own income, rather

than bow, and bring myself under obligations to any great man for the favour. This is perhaps pride—call it what you please, you must take me as I am—a strange fellow, but a sincere friend.

CHAPTER XVII.

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As benefits forgot.

A *thing* of shreds and patches.

SHAKSPEARE.

Soon after I had finished the perusal of his narrative, Mr Belfield returned. In the course of our conversation, after expressing himself much interested about my situation, he said, that as we were to leave our present residence, we might come over to his estate, where there was a snug cottage empty; and, if my father wished it, he would add a few acres of land, where we might be very comfortable, while he would be gratified with the company of an agreeable friend. I thanked him for his goodness, and said, that I would consult my father, and

take the proposal into consideration. We spent the day with much calm and rational pleasure; and Mr Belfield made me promise, at parting next morning, to pay a visit of some length at Hawthorn-lodge, as soon as I should find it convenient. He urged me with great earnestness to make my visit a little before Christmas, and to bring my father's determination along with me.

My mother, who was in bad health, expressed a kind of horror at leaving that part of the country where she had spent her life, and urged my father to procure a cottage in the neighbourhood; in which she might linger out the few days of her appointed time. My father, who had often given way to her more unreasonable demands, promised to comply with her wishes; and, if practicable, to look out for a suitable situation without delay.

At the time appointed, I set out on my visit to Hawthorn-lodge. Though the journey could not be accomplished in one day, yet, as the weather was a clear frost, and apparent-

ly settled, I resolved to walk. Having slept a night on the road, I expected to reach my destination by the evening of next day; but a heavy fall of snow coming on in the afternoon, I was obliged to stop at a market-town, about ten miles short of Hawthorn-lodge. It was a fair day in the place, and the inn was crowded; however, as I was always pleased with seeing varieties of human nature, I expected the scene might afford me some amusement. In this expectation, however, I was somewhat disappointed. Driving hard bargains, different degrees of intoxication, accompanied by oaths, ribaldry, and nonsense, among a constant succession of guests, with some rustic courtships, were all that occurred for my entertainment. When most of the company had departed, a considerable body of men entered the house in the dusk, who seemed to attract no small degree of attention from the landlord. One or two of those who remained in the room where I was, informed me that it was a party of smugglers, who, having a quantity of goods at some distance, had

chosen this stormy night to transport them, there being less chance of detection. We heard the party very jolly in another room: they affected to have been at the fair; and, from motives of policy, it was proposed by the landlord, that, as supper was ready, all the company in the house should sup together. Although this did not meet with my approbation, yet as no objections were started, and, as I did not wish to appear fastidious, I gave a tacit consent; and about sixteen, including one or two who had just come in, sat down at table. The smugglers were half tipsy; and, at the other end of the table, there were two or three very noisy voices, one of which seemed familiar to my ear. After some time, I got a view of the speaker's face; but my feelings may be conceived when I discovered him to be Smith, my degraded brother-in-law. I pretended fatigue, and wished to retire; but he who seemed to have an authority, said, that as he was to treat the company, no one should retire till the bowls now on the table were emptied. I entreated,

but in vain; and was ultimately reseated by manual force. Rather than get into a squabble, I resolved upon submission and keeping quiet; trusting that Smith would not recognize me. But in this I was unhappily mistaken; for he almost immediately addressed me, in a style well calculated to irritate my feelings. I was silent; though he upbraided me with my poverty; and used many epithets which I was indignant to hear, and have no inclination to repeat. Continuing this torrent of abuse, he asked if the stingy dog, my father, was still alive; adding, that he was an old miserly rascal, and had refused him the loan of five pounds. My blood now began to boil with indignation, and I certainly never felt, in my life, so much inclined to come to blows. I still endeavoured, however, to suppress my anger; but the fellow would not allow matters to stop here. Pulling out a handful of gold, he chinked it across the table in my face (for he had now moved opposite to me): "There," said he, "tell the old lubberly scrub that I have got plenty,

and that he and his dirt may be d——d!" Half choked with rage, and scarcely capable of articulation, I replied: "You are unworthy of my notice; otherwise, I would break every bone in your skin, for this brutal attack upon a father, who has been in jail for your debts, and is, at this moment, the only parent to your helpless and deserted children!" With a fiend-like laugh of scorn, the scoundrel replied: "My children! that I deny; if you knew not your sister's tricks—I did!" I started to my feet —when Smith, darting across the table, struck at, but missed me. What I was about to do, or what might have been done, I will not pretend to say; for in an instant my brutal antagonist was knocked down, by a man on his own side of the table.

When he got up, the same man challenged him to the floor, and said he would fight him fairly, although he did not deserve it, "If I should lose my life in the cause," said he, "I will yield it with pleasure in defence of those, whom you have now traduced and insulted; I know both them and

you; and tell you, Sir, you are a scoundrel! This gentleman, I must say, although in his presence, is too good, too worthy, to be mentioned in your hearing: he is a man, and to him all men are brothers; and has been a benefactor to me and mine in the hour of distress—Will you fight, you dirty blackguard,—you low, contemptible villain?" No reply was given to this; for the wretch sat silent, and pale as ashes. The astonishment of the whole company had been excited; and my rage having calmed down into contempt, I gazed upon my unknown defender: I had some recollection of his features, but nothing farther, till he mentioned the name of Roger, and his wife's delivery of a son at the theatre, as already related. The poor fellow now related that occurrence with precision and modesty; magnifying his obligations to me; giving at the same time an abstract of my connexion with the despicable Smith; and the misfortunes which he had been the cause of to my family; and concluded by apologizing for the freedom which he had taken, as he deemed it necessary for my

complete vindication from this most brutal attack.

A buzz of approbation went round the company; every individual of which pressed forward and shook hands with me and my heroic defender. They complimented me upon the forbearance I had exhibited; begged of me to forget the insults I had received, which reflected disgrace upon him only who had so far degraded himself as to offer them; and, with the unanimous consent of all present, he was now kicked out of the room, with positive assurance that he should be served in the same manner, if he dared again to intrude himself upon the company. Although several individuals among them, as I have mentioned, had exhibited symptoms of intoxication, all *such* symptoms had now vanished, and the manners of the most boisterous appeared much improved.

When the party broke up, my champion asked, if I was not thus far on a visit to Mr Belfield: upon replying in the affirmative, he inquired if I had a horse—I told him I had not: he then, with a low bow,

which I returned by a hearty shake of the hand, bade me good-night.

I went to bed, but sleep had deserted my pillow; my indignation was aroused at the insults I had received, and I felt a conscious shame at being involved in such a scene in a promiscuous crowd. I had never before been in a situation for which I had so great reason to blush (except at the Edinburgh theatre, when I had been duped by the swindler, and at the tavern with Mr ****, my expected patron); and my mortification was severe. However, after several hours tossing and tumbling, nature became exhausted; I dropt asleep, and did not awake till late in the morning.

When just about to depart, I was waited on by my heroic friend, Roger, ushered in by the landlord, who told me that my horse was ready. I looked surprised: "Why sir, Mr Belfield sent me with his horse to meet you." "Are you in Mr Belfield's service?" "Yes, please your honour, I have been so before now; indeed I have

so good and kind a master, I could not think of leaving him; but he is impatient for your arrival, and, if you please, we shall proceed. We soon reached the vicinity of Hawthorn-lodge; and, although it was now the depth of winter, I saw that the situation was delightful, and that many improvements were going forward. My reception was such, as the generous disposition of my entertainer might have led me to expect; and two weeks slid away almost imperceptibly.

Mr Belfield shewed me what he had termed a cottage, being a plain but commodious house: this, he said, was the lodging he had prepared for my parents and me; and if I had no better prospects, there were several respectable families in the neighbourhood, at a distance from any school: I might have the cottage, a garden, and a cow; he would build a school-room for me, and thus at once serve his tenants, and be of some use to me; while he would receive the chief benefit himself, by securing an agreeable companion, and, he trusted, a sincere friend.

In acknowledging my obligation to Mr

Belfield, I did not fail to represent to him how agreeable the scheme would be to me; but regretted that there was an insuperable objection, my mother having expressed so great reluctance to leave her native spot, that I had been induced to provide a residence for my father and her in their present neighbourhood; that proposals had been made to me by the landlord, and others in the vicinity, for adding a school to it, which would enable me to render assistance to my parents, whom I could not think of deserting in their present situation.

Mr Belfield was pleased to say, that no good man would endeavour to oppose a plan dictated by filial duty: "but remember," said he, "should any alteration take place, you still have a friend; and I have the first claim when you are inclined to change your situation."

I left my friend, having promised to spend the vacation annually with him, provided I took up school. Upon my arrival at home, the arrangements for the school were soon completed. A dozen of families agreed to

give me thirty pounds per annum, a house and garden, with a cow to be kept on a contiguous farm. As soon as the season permitted, the school-house was erected; we removed to our new dwelling, and I immediately entered upon my charge. The number of the pupils was limited to forty, and my constituents were at liberty to send children, of other families, if deficient of their proportion. This was but a poor result for all my mother's golden dreams of clerical dignity; but, compared with my situation for some time past, it was independence, and I felt my mind expand accordingly.

My mother had long been very infirm—her removal from the fire-side, where she had spent her happiest days and reared her family, together with the penurious situation to which we were now doomed, operated strongly on her mind, and she became visibly worse. During the summer the small-pox broke out in the village. My two little nephews had never been inoculated, partly through the carelessness of their father, and perhaps owing to the religious prejudices of

their grandmother; for she was tenacious of her opinions, and affirmed that inoculation was a direct tempting of Providence. I had oftener than once attempted to reason her out of this, and some other equally absurd opinions; but, highly as she thought of my qualifications (and I am fully persuaded that she estimated them more highly than any one else), I could not convince her: indeed I have found it, in general, a far easier task to cure ignorance than to remove prejudice.

I had entreated my brother-in-law to get the children inoculated, and to say nothing about the matter till it was over: he promised; but that, like many more of his promises, was never fulfilled. They were now both seized with the small-pox of the confluent kind.—I procured a medical gentleman to attend them; but the disease proved fatal, and the helpless victims were buried on the same day, in one grave, by the side of their mother. In the fervour of my feelings, I had unguardedly charged my mother with preventing their inoculation; her concern

for the loss of both her grandchildren was extreme, and perhaps a degree of self-accusation tended to aggravate her distress.

I had now commenced my first attempt at public teaching, and short experience convinced me that I was a very inadequate judge of the drudgery, before making the trial. I was prepared for meeting an idler, or a dunce, occasionally; but the pride, ignorance, and self-conceit of my constituents, I had not calculated upon: I may add also, their different, and even diametrically opposite opinions, concerning my mode of teaching, and government of the school. I was no advocate for corporal punishment, except in flagrant cases; emulation I believed a more useful incitement, for I conceived it very possible to beat a dull boy into stupidity; and while I deemed it practicable, and perhaps the best method to correct idleness and mischievous pranks, I did not perceive how intellect could be communicated by a strap or a rod. Some of my constituents, however, went much farther than this: they would not allow their children to be

corrected upon any account; the children knew this, and the consequences may easily be anticipated. One family insisted upon their children occupying the head of the forms, when seated, and the top of the class during the lessons; another, that the Old and New Testaments should be the only English books read in the school; while a third said, they ought to be discontinued altogether. The mother would insist, that her children should get by heart the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, with the Scripture Proofs, and Willison's Mother's Catechism; while the father would have no Catechism taught at all. In short, I was teazed almost to distraction; not only by the contrary opinions of different families, but by the contending sentiments of the two parents.

I was one evening invited to tea by one of my constituents; when, in the middle of some conversation between the landlord and me, the mistress of the house asked me, if it was true that I had said to her Davie, that the sun stood still, and that it was the earth that

turned round. I admitted that I said so. The good woman shrunk from me with a kind of horror, saying, she knew little more that an atheist could do; for I denied the Scriptures, which say, that the foundations of the earth are laid by the Lord, upon the great waters; and that the sun, like a bridegroom, rejoiceth to run his race. After what I had admitted, she could now believe all that she had heard; that I pretended to foretel 'clipses of the sun and moon; if so, it was downright black art, and she wondered how I could dare to set my foot in a pulpit after that. "Will you pretend," cried the good woman, warming with the subject, "to guide the sun, and direct the moon in her course? It is the Lord alone, who doth according to his will in the armies of heaven; his chosen servant Joshua, did indeed, by his express command, say to the sun, *stand thou still on Gibeon, and thou moon in the valley of Ajalon;* and I know that the shadow went backwards ten degrees on the dial of Ahaz: but whose hand was it that did this? It

was not a philosopher or a 'stronomer, as they call themselves! na, na! Waes me! if that be what they learn at colleges, they are better at hame; *pretending to be wise, they become fools!* Learn my bairns to read the Scriptures an' say their questions—I've nae objections to writing an' counting; they are baith usefu' an' lawfu'; but nane o' your 'stronomy an' ither outlandish things, to confuse their heads an' poison their minds! I'm tald you have great pressfu's of books; and indeed I'm feared that it may be applied to you, as we read in the New Testament, *much learning hath made thee mad.* An' now that I am begun, I maun tell you mair: you speak profanely in your school: you bade my lassie, Susie, read with *grace,* when her lesson was a parcel of stuff out of some play-book. What grace could there be there? You maunna be angry; but indeed I have muckle dread, that there's little grace or yet goodness to be expected frae either the writers or readers of play-books. I believe you a weel-meaning lad, an' wad like to see you in the right road; but ye'll

never find it, till, like them of old, you'll tak' what you now think your rare and curious books, an' burn them: you'll then be in the way of grace for yoursel', an' may have some face to speak about it to your scholars." "Hout, hout," said her husband, "you are like the minister o' Rescobie's mare, you have a good memory, but nae judgment; haud your tongue, an' dinna expose yoursel'; zeal without knowledge has blawn you fu' o' spiritual pride."

From the above specimens, the reader will believe that my situation had no great charms for me. The progress of my pupils, and the satisfaction that I was earning the bread I ate, were the only circumstances that reconciled me to a fatiguing and irksome task. My intercourse with the world was now more limited than ever: always at home, I saw no member of society beyond the bounds of the village, except on Sunday, when those from the extremities of the parish met in the church-yard. An occasional interview with the clergyman, or spending an evening with some of my con-

stituents, was the only social intercourse I had; and except a letter occasionally from Mr Belfield, I had no literary correspondence.

While I was thus plodding on, in a kind of mill horse track,

"The world forgetting, by the world forgot,"

the two following letters were one morning put into my hands:

"SIR,—I have to inform you, that, according to instructions received, I have purchased £800 stock, 3 per cent. consols, which is vested in your name; the receipt for same I have herewith inclosed. I shall be glad to be favoured with your commands concerning this, or any thing else in my way. And am, Sir, your most obedient servant, JONATHAN REYNOLDS."

'Change Alley, London, June 30th 17—.

I read this letter twice over without being able to comprehend it. I turned it up, and looked at the address, which applied correctly to me. At last it occurred, that the other letter might elucidate the

mystery; so I opened it with eagerness, and read as follows.

"DEAR SIR,—False modesty on your part, and a compliance with absurd custom on mine, have long kept us asunder, and interrupted our correspondence. I esteem you as a friend, and am indebted to you as the preserver of my life. You had a fair prospect of a comfortable settlement in the world, of which the selfish politics of my step-father deprived you. I want opportunity of proving the extent of my friendship, and can neither confer an adequate reward for the services you have rendered me, nor make sufficient reparation for the living which you lost by Sir Peter's interference.

"Yet, anxious to bestow upon you at least a permanent mark of my esteem, I have ordered eight hundred pounds, of 3 per cent. Consols, to be vested in your name, of which, I presume, you will receive official advice from Jonathan Reynolds, broker, 'Change Alley, London. It has been my wish to serve you in a manner more efficient and

more suitable to that delicacy of mind which is peculiar to you, and so incompatible with the times in which we live; but not finding this practicable, I have only to beg, that you will neither offend me, nor injure yourself, by refusing this trifling proof of my gratitude and esteem. I expect to be on the Continent next week, and the time of my return is uncertain. Being heartily tired of the name of Burton, it is probable that to-morrow I shall change it to that of Maitland.

"On my return to Britain, my residence will be Maitland Park, by Cardigan, Wales; where Colonel Maitland will always be glad to see or hear from one who has so highly merited the esteem and friendship of ELIZA BURTON."

I had begun to know the world; and the eccentric benevolence of Miss Burton (now, I presumed, Mrs Maitland), had made me well acquainted with her: I therefore thought, that to refuse her donation would be, as she termed it, false delicacy and ridiculous folly. I consequently felt grateful

for her friendship; was glad to hear of her marriage; and most sincerely wished her uninterrupted felicity.

My mother had now become paralytic; I therefore procured a nurse to be in the house with her, and resolved to make her remaining days as comfortable, as her situation and my finances would admit.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Ilk ane's wiser than anither,
"Things are no gaun right," quo' Tam :
"Let us aftener meet thegither,
Twice an owk's no worth a d—n."

MACNIELL.

AT the period of which I am now writing, the French revolution had made considerable progress, and the people of Britain were beginning to be of very different opinions concerning its probable consequences.

Many in all ranks, generally the young and inexperienced, with sanguine tempers and warm imaginations, had hailed it as the dawn of a glorious era, pregnant with happiness to the human race.—While those, who were perfectly satisfied with the present order of things, or from longer experience, were able to calculate upon the un-

governable tempers and passions of men, when loose from legal restraint, viewed the revolution with horror; and, as if anticipating the consequences that ultimately followed, became suspicious of every one who could not regard it in the same light with themselves. The veil was not yet drawn aside, and the demon of discord had not pulled off his mask. Political discussion became frequent in every village and hamlet in the kingdom; and pamphlets, of stimulating and inflammatory tendency, were industriously circulated. Among these, the productions of Paine, a discontented demagogue, under the fascinating title of "The Rights of Man," held a conspicuous place. Among my constituents in the school, there were three or four with some pretensions to literary knowledge, and possessed of just that share of political information, which tended, at that time, to heat their imaginations, without enabling them to judge or reflect with prudence. They read the newspapers regularly, and commented on their contents: "The Rights of Man" inflamed their minds.

Deceived by the bold assertions of the author, and unable to detect the sophistry of his reasoning, they persuaded themselves that the glorious fabric of the British constitution, like an aged oak enveloped in ivy, was so beset with corruption, that its ruin was inevitable. They considered France as about to commence a millenium of felicity, and became enthusiasts in the cause of liberty. They notably verified the observation of the poet:

"A *little* learning is a dangerous thing."

They became fond of declamation, and finding none, in that circle in which they moved, capable of confuting their specious arguments, they sometimes cheated themselves into the belief that they were unanswerable. Their enthusiasm increased; they disseminated their opinions with the zeal of apostles and, by the united strength of argument and whisky, obtained a number of proselytes. There was an alehouse in the village, where these discussions were often held. The landlord, who was a quiet, modest man,

was often half compelled to keep them company; and he declared that their arguments became stronger, and their convictions more decisive, in proportion as they became heated with the inspiration of John Barleycorn.

Of all my constituents only two stood aloof. I was often invited to spend the afternoon in one or other of their houses, and a majority of the party were generally present; when the conversation always turned upon politics, for they could now talk of nothing else. I had been a kind of favourite among them; for, although we had differed in opinion about other matters, they respected my abilities, and became exceedingly anxious to secure me as an auxiliary in their important cause. I had hitherto been moderate in delivering my opinions, and they were not without hope that I might be gained over.

It was now the month of November, 1792; and as the long winter evenings had set in, they proposed to meet weekly, or oftener, if found agreeable, for the purpose of reading the newspapers and political pamphlets. The school-room was deemed a centrical and con-

venient situation for their club-room: the plan was digested, matters were arranged accordingly, and a communication was made to me, requesting my attendance as a favour. I now began seriously to apprehend, that they were over-stepping the boundaries of prudence, and that their measures were calculated neither to promote their individual interests, nor those of society.

In an earnest and friendly manner, therefore, I begged of them to pause and reflect, before they allowed their better judgments to be perverted by violent and designing men, or hot-headed, inexperienced enthusiasts. I told them, that I was well persuaded of the purity of their intentions, but was very doubtful what such measures might ultimately produce; that I had resolved to take no side in the party wranglings of the day, and would seriously advise every one, who wished to lead a quiet and peaceable life, to adopt the same resolution. I reminded them, that the school-room, although their property, was considered as mine, while occupied by me; that I was responsible

for the purposes to which it might be applied; and therefore did not consider myself at liberty to let it become the weekly resort of a party, who met avowedly for political discussion; and that, in my opinion, it would be much wiser in them to think less on these subjects. I concluded my address by saying, that, when at college, I had attended a course of Lectures on Natural History, of which I had taken notes; that during my leisure hours, since that time, I had occasionally amused myself with similar pursuits; and if they were at a loss for amusement during the long winter evenings, I would most cheerfully give them one lecture, or even two, weekly, on subjects that could not fail to interest them; such as the nature of soils, grasses, trees, and animals; the qualities of different kinds of manure, and other topics connected with rural affairs; that I would be happy to correct and improve my theories by their experience, and humbly hoped, by this plan, we might mutually instruct and entertain each other.

My proposal was rejected with indignant

scorn. They told me plainly, that I was an enemy to the best interests of man; a supporter of the combined systems of tyranny and priestcraft; and that nothing better could be expected from one, whose sole chance of promotion, under the present system of things, was by becoming the advocate of corruption and oppression, under the mask of loyalty and religion. They pitied my infatuation, in neither feeling for others, nor knowing my own interest:—but my error would be seen when it was too late.

A few days after this conversation, I received a letter from the committee of management for the school, intimating, that they had no farther occasion for my services as a teacher; and ordering us to remove at Whitsunday first from the house we now possessed. Here was freedom and the rights of man, with a vengeance. This intimation I received on a Saturday, and on Monday only seven scholars attended the school. There are always officious friends in every place,

from the palace to the village hamlet. Some of these busy intermeddlers, under the pretence of condoling with my mother, told her the story, or at least the consequences. She did not understand it; but imagined that the taking away of the children from school was disgraceful to the character of her darling and only son, now her sole reliance. She took the matter to heart—it agitated the flame which was just alive—and the vital spark expired!

Having paid the last duty to her remains, I took legal advice respecting my procedure in regard to the school; the consequence of which was, that I attended daily as usual, and when my quarter's salary became due, sent a written order for it by the servant. To this I received no answer; but, determined no longer tamely to submit to my constituents, I wrote to them, that unless my salary was immediately paid, and security lodged for what was due at Whitsunday next, I would commence an action at law against them, and state all the reasons and causes of our rupture.

Some, I understood, were for setting me at absolute defiance; but others, a little more prudent, advised that I should be paid, and treated with the contempt I so amply deserved. The money was paid accordingly.

Politics and party spirit still continued to run higher in the country. There was a private school in a neighbouring parish, where the teacher and his constituents had differed, upon the very opposite side of politics to that in which I had been placed. He was a young man of good enough intentions, but little experience; had at an early period joined the general acclaim, with which the French Revolution was hailed in Britain; and never once dreamed, that it would be productive of that anarchy, and those enormities, which afterwards ensued. A warm and sincere friend to the House of Brunswick and the constitution of 1688, he saw, or imagined he saw, corruptions that had taken place, and which engendered others. Political discussion being at that period like an epidemical disease, it required more caution than youth is generally pos-

sessed of, to avoid the infection. He had expressed himself rather freely; and the leading people of the parish, being staunch loyalists, who would admit of no principle in opposition to their own, which was to approve of those in power, and all the measures adopted by them, accused the poor man of disaffection to the state, and dismissed him from his office.

The heritors had heard of my deposition, and the place was offered to me. I had a strong inclination to fix my residence with my friend Mr Belfield, where I believed the storm of politics would never reach; but my father had expressed a wish, to lay his dust among that of his ancestors. In due compliance with his feelings, therefore, I accepted the offer made to me, and took charge of the school.

My former constituents, hearing of this, conceived that the person who had been displaced to make room for me, was just such a one as they wanted. He was sent for, received in a full meeting, and invited to the honours of the sitting. Their griev-

ances against me were laid before him, and proposals were made for his taking the charge, with a full statement of what they expected from him; when, to their great surprise, he declined the situation. He told them, that he was sorry they had mistaken his character; for, although he was certainly an advocate for freedom of opinion, he would never resign that freedom to be the tool of any party, or the trumpeter of speculative principles, which, even should he as an individual entertain them, he was doubtful of the propriety of disseminating; that it was obvious from their present interview, they held opinions to which he could not assent, and wished to adopt practices which he would never countenance; that he certainly would never allow any house under his charge, to become the periodical haunt of mistaken men, met for purposes of which he could not approve. Both parties, finding that their opinions were so dissimilar, separated with mutual chagrin.

My new constituents had also experienced disappointment: they expected that I was

to become the advocate of an exterminating war against all innovators, both at home and abroad; that my pen was to be taken up in defence of Ministers, and my ear always upon the watch for the whispers of sedition and the grumblings of discontent, all of which I was to report to my superiors as opportunity might occur. And, finally, that I should preach occasionally, inculcating those opinions in the temple, and in the name of him, who came into this world to preach "peace on earth, and good will towards men."

All this was never dictatorially laid down to me, but I was made to understand that it was wished and expected. However, I took my own way, without opposing them, and although some did venture to suspect my loyalty, insinuating that I was a spy in the camp, yet, I believe, the greater part set me down as a cautious, quiet man, whose zeal could not be made equal to their own; but who, if I could not be made an active friend, was not likely to become an enemy.

My income was at least equal to my former salary; I gave satisfaction as a teacher; and things went on "not so badly."

Although not so directly connected with my own story, I may here relate some circumstances that occurred in my former situation, after my departure. Disappointed in their expectations from the young man already mentioned, they wrote to the secretary of the Friends of the People in Edinburgh, requesting him to find them a teacher of proper abilities and independent principles. That request met prompt attention; and a spruce young man came down from the metropolis, warmly recommended,—entered upon the charge, and gave great satisfaction.

About nine months had elapsed since his settlement had taken place, when, on a Sunday morning, I was surprised by a visit from Janet, the wife of the proprietor of the house and school from which I had been dismissed, and who was at the head of the reforming party in that quarter. From the terms upon which I had

parted with my *quondam* friends, I had no reason to expect this visit; and perhaps my surprise was exhibited in my countenance; for the good woman, after her first salutation, addressed me thus:

"I see, Sir, you are wondering what's brought me here; an' nae ferlie! but I want to speak wi' you, to get your advice; although I'm fley'd it will sair little gude end; yet ye was aye sae cautious, spak' sae friendly an' sensibly, that I coudna sattle till I saw you."

"I am much obliged, Mrs R., by your good opinion, and shall be glad indeed, if my advice can be of any service to you or your family. What is the matter?"

"Matter! O Sir, we're a' ga'en wrang thegither! ye ken weel what whigmalieries an' nonsense had gotten into the gudeman's noddle afore you left us—it was a wae waga'en to mae nor me at the time; altho', ablins, we didna think that ony ane o' us wad ha'e rued it sae sairly as maist feck o' us ha'e done sinsyne. Oh Sir! my very heart's like to brak whan I think upo' the way

that we are ga'en on now! an' what'll be the upshot, the bairn's no born that can tell!

Whan ye was our dominie, a' the childer ga'ed to the kirk wi' you;—said their questions as clair as A, B, C; an' wad ha'e scriftit aff a psalm or a paraphrase ilka Sunday night, an' had some kind o' havins thro' the owk. Now, there's never ane o' them looks in at the kirk door, but gallops about the hale Sunday, seekin' nests, takin' trouts, or brakin' the laird's timmer; an' if their poor heart-broken mithers only speak to them, we get the warst word in their wame. This is ill eneugh, but I've waur to tell you—the poor things wad maybe gather mair sense as they grew up, if they had either precept or example. But, willawins, Sir! I think our new dominie's an atheist, an' will soon poison the hale parish; he gars my flesh a' creep to hear him; an' the warst o't is, that the hale town rins at his tail! My gudeman winna be i' the kirk anes in sax owks, an' whan he gangs, troth I think it's for nae good; for as soon's

he's out at the door he's finding fau't wi' the minister baith in's prayers an's preachin'. He says that the preachin's a' buff, an' his prayers are an abomination. He never apens a buik at hame, an' it bena the Rights o' Man, or some new fangled nonsense that I dinna understand. The gudeman says that buik explains a' the rights o' society, an' the duties that ilka ane awes to anither, an' that the author sud get a *statute* ereckit to him.

No kenin thae kittle words, I ventured ae day to speer the meanin' o' the word *society*, which I thought meant a' body round about, gryte an' sma'; he bade me no fash my head wi' things aboon my *compur*hension, but gang and mind the kirn. But, Sir, I'm sure the word *society* has some other meanin' to our gudeman, for he says that a' the members o' *society* are free alike; now, there's no ane about the house *free* but himsel'; fient ane, auld nor young, can turn their fit to his satisfaction, nor venture a single cheep against a' that blae-flummery that's makin' sic a haliballoo in

the warld. There's no ane o' a' our cottar-fowk that can wurk a darg to his mind; he's seenil at hame, an', atweesh you an' me, he's slouthin' the farm—that kaewitted bodie o' a dominie's turned his harns a' the-gither. He was ill aneugh afore, but things ha'e come to sic a height now, that I'm really eerie about what'll happen i' the lang run!

Wae fell the widdy fou! that ever he set his snout here, for he's driven a' our clachan daft, an' tynin our bairns forby. There daresna be a Bible nor a Testament seen i' the school; and fient ane o' them's ha'en a pair o' carriches i' their hand, sin that un-chancy day that ye left it. Ye'll maybe, nae doubt, think a' this is ill enough, but I've mair to say yet, an' speer your advice about:—I'm some fleyed too, that ye think it no Sunday's cracks; but, Sir, I hope you'll consider it's the only time that I could win awa, or, at any rate, venture to see you; for I'm wae* to say, that you're no i' the gudeman's buiks yet. And, to tell you the truth, I wadna gotten aff this mornin',

gif that smatchet of a dominie an' him hadna been awa stravagin', naebody kens whare; there winna be a styme o' them seen again atweesh this and twal hours at e'en, whan they'll be baith hame glowrin' fu'; for the dominie's a juttlin elf, an' atweesh you and me, I'm wae to say, our ain gudeman's begun to like a drappie; his temper's sair changed now, for he's capernoity at the best; an', whan he's blinket, he wad fight wi' the wind."

I bade the good woman come to the subject, and I would judge of the propriety of its discussion.

"Aweel, Sir, ye ken Robbie the farmer o' Knowhead, a decent thrifty chield, has a weel stockit farm, an' a canty snod biggin; an' mair nor a' that, 's as stately a strappin' lad, as ever stappit in nowt's leather. It's, let me see, mair nor three towmants sin' he begude to had a fyke wi' our Eppie; an', tho' she was only se'enteen year auld, I was weel pleased to see't. About that time our gudeman an' him were as thrang's the deil an' Tam Peter, aye

trottin back an' fore to ither, crackin about their drainin', fallowin', stots, an' stirkies, an' a' sic like. The gudeman and me said, tho' it was time aneugh for the lassie to marry, yet if they baith keepit in ae mind for twa or three years, she mith be cothiely set down.

"But wae's my craws! our gudeman gat's head fu' o' nonsense.—Robbie came o'erby ae gloamin' an' begude a crackin'; I saw Eppie stealin' a teet at him, an' tryin' to hod the blink that bruindet in her e'e, whan he coost a look till her o'er the ingle. Aweel, her father gat on upo' *policies*, for he cudna had aff them sleepin' nor waukin'—got a roosin the fowk o' France, an' descryvin' a' our ain government; he speered at Robbie, what he thought about it. Robbie wasna very rash, an' wanted to waive the subject; but the gudeman wadna let it rest. I winket to the lad; for I had an ill dridder o' what mith happen atweesh them; how an' a' be, the gudeman bullyragged him sae sair, that he begude to tell his mind; an' crowsly did he

speak whan he loused his pock, altho' cautiously an' very sicker. I didna understand the ha'f o' the gudeman's arguments; indeed Robbie 'ledged that he didna see his ain drift. I thought there was muckle gude sense in what the lad said; an' wad fain ha'en our gudeman layin't to heart; but he fidged in his chair, an', at the lang run, his een begude a bruindin like elf-candle. Whan Robbie had done, the gudeman ga'e a rap upo' the table that gart it a' rair, cryin: "Sir, you're a *rusty-cat*, gang hame, an' let me never see you in o'er my door again!" Robbie wanted to pacify him; but he wad neither hear rhyme nor reason,—tald the lad that he had a saul fit for nane but a slave, an' sware a gryte aith, that he wad never wissle words wi' him till he changed his mind. Robbie coost a stown glance at Eppie, an' slippet out at the door. The poor lassie didna sleep a wink a' night; an' neist mornin', whan she came to her parritch, her een were like scored collops. Her father saw them, an' guessed the reason;—the passion wasna

aff him, an' he debarred her frae ever speakin' to the poor fallow either at kirk or market; an', as far as I ken, they've never washin' words wi' ither sinsyne. But what wad ye think now? About three months syne, her father fetcht in that worthless vaig of a dominie to board into our house, that he mith get mair o' his company; L—d ken's he's gotten o'er muckle o't ere this time! Or ever he'd been twa owks there, he begude an' chattered awa to Eppie, an' made twenty bonnie things o' her; cuitled at her elbow e'enin an' mornin', that the lassie coudna get her very wark wrought. He has sic a gift o' gab, an' sae fu' o' flattery, that I'm far frae easy about it; an' nae wonder, if ye kent it a'; her father now tells me, that the dominie wants to marry, an' that he'll gar her tak' him; for he's a clever boddie, an' whan things come round as they maun do soon, he'll be a gryte man! Laith, laith, wad I be, that my bairn sud ever gang sic a gate; for by an' atour a' the fauts I've tauld ye o' him, he's a filthy, laidly elf; an' there's liars, if he

has na been o'er sib wi' mae nor ane o' the lasses i' the clachan already. Now, Sir, ye ken young women are floughtress creatures, an' my lassie's no fish mair nor anither; mair nor that, she's haddin' an' dung, daresna speak to them that I'm sure she anes liket—that wandought ne'er-do-weel o' a dominie, blawin' in her lug, an' winna had his filthy fingers aff her; an' her father dingin' upon her to tak' him; I'm really fleyed the lassie fling hersel' awa upo' the ettercap,—or wha kens? maybe lat him do the thing she'll rue as braid's baith her looves! an' I'm sure, afore that were to happen, I'd rather see her in her windin'-sheet!

"Now, Sir, will ye tell me what I sall do to prevent a' this? or what plan I sall fa' upon, to put the weirdless elf frae the house? If a' be true that I've heard, he'll no be lang o' kythin in his ain colours; but I'm in a swither lest mair mischief happen afore that time."

I was at a loss how to advise the poor woman, especially as the character I had

heard of the schoolmaster strongly corroborated what she had told me. I proposed to her, if practicable, to send Eppie out of the way for some time, as there was indeed a probability of events happening that might render her husband less sanguine about the match; but how to obtain his consent in the meantime, was a business of importance. However, advising her to this, if possible, and recommending her to keep a strict eye upon her daughter for the present, I dismissed her, heartily sorry for the situation in which she was placed.

The result proved that this fond mother's fears were far from groundless; and the crisis of the schoolmaster's fate being nearer than she had anticipated, in all probability saved Eppie from falling his victim.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.


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